

CAESAR IN EGYPT

COSTANZA

CON ARCADE GATTI

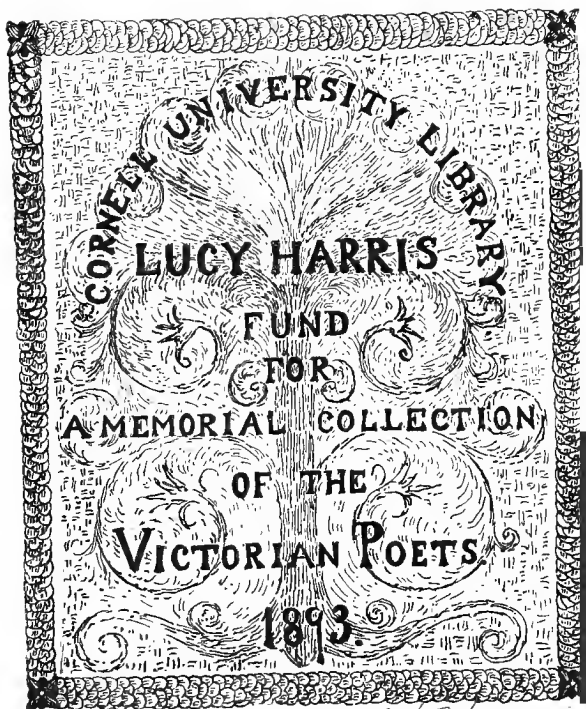
COSTANZA GATTI



ROMA

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CAESAR IN EGYPT, COSTANZA,
AND OTHER POEMS.





From a Negative by JOMBARDI & Co., London.

Joseph Ellis

CAESAR IN EGYPT

COSTANZA

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

JOSEPH ELLIS

Second Edition

WITH EMENDATIONS AND ADDITIONS



LONDON

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P R E F A C E.



THE Author, when preparing the first Edition of 'Caesar in Egypt' for the press, was advised by his literary friends that a Preface, in that instance, was unnecessary, or disadvantageous. Adoption of this opinion did not prove satisfactory; for, speaking only of the titular Poem, none of the Reviewers who honoured that Work with any mentionable notice (perhaps for lack of a Preface), justly recognised its subject; their view being—a mere transcription, and a 'Catalogue of Egyptian relics.' The most generous of them¹ pointed doubtingly to 'originality'—as the crucial test. Now, a glance at 'The Argument' would support the assertion that, whatever its artistic or poetic worth, the poem is, at least, original,—the Alexandrine War not having been previously dealt with poetically; whilst the Second Part is, plainly, an invention—on the slenderest suggestion of history.

A well-read commentator, of the order of the critics, had the candour to confess that he knew next to nothing of the Alexandrine War, or of the association of the great Dictator with Cleopatra. And recently,² an Article entitled 'Former Invasions of Egypt,' for instruction of the public, sums it up in one brief sentence: 'Even Caesar was powerless so long as he remained in Alexandria, and had to be relieved by a motley host of Syrians, Bedouins, and Jews marching on

¹ *The Times*, February 9, 1877.

² *Pall Mall Gazette*, September 1, 1882.

undecided; for in one place he refers to 'a tawny front,' and in another says, 'And here my bluest veins to kiss.' Indeed, Artists, supposed to be well-informed, have depicted the famous Egyptian Queen in various shades of swarthy; and one, a Frenchman of repute (Gérôme), represented her (in the Royal Academy Exhibition, some years ago), as a Negress with woolly hair, etc. Moreover, in comparison of mind and manner, it should not be overlooked that the Cleopatra of the present Poem is, presumably, of the age of *twenty*, whereas, at the period of Marcus Antonius (twelve years later), she would be thirty-two; hence Shakspeare lets her say (*Ant. and Cleo.*)

' Broad-fronted Caesar,
When thou wast here above the ground, I was
A morsel for a monarch.'

There is, besides, at this time, a particular incitement to a Preface—again affecting the question of originality. 'Columbus at Seville' was first published in 1869; secondly, in 1876; and now, for the third time, in this book. In 1880, the Laureate published his 'Columbus.' Admitting the differences between the two, there are more similarities. Both are in Monologue, the variation being that the first is a soliloquy, the second an objurgation. Shall we compare the piping of the Bullfinch with the thunder-boom of Jove? Yet the little Bullfinch requires justice; the chronology reversed,—what would not people say? Hence the Author of 'Columbus at Seville' is on his defence. On reading the 'Columbus' of the Laureate for the first time now, he can scarcely be unconscious that, without explanation, he would stand to be accused of paraphrase, or, at least, of reverberation. Of the reasonableness of this impression, readers who may take the trouble to examine will determine. Another distinction may, in frankness, be pointed to—namely, in characterization—on which there will be two opinions.¹

¹ It should perhaps be mentioned that an early copy of the second edition of 'Columbus at Seville' was sent by the author to the Laureate.

The coincidence of the acted drama of the present Egyptian War with the republication of a work upon 'The Alexandrine War' should not be left unnoticed. None will fail to observe certain resemblances ; such as the burning of the City, interference with water supply by the Egyptians, and the operations of the native army exterior to the seisin of the foreigner. For the Romans, read the English ; for Achillas, read Arabi ; for Caesar, read Wolseley ; for Cleopatra, read Tewfik—the sequel being that the English General re-establishes the Khedive,—and the parallel is complete.

The Author, having devoted much care in revising, throughout, hopes (also by some additions), to have rendered the book, generally, more deserving of critical and popular acceptance.

MONKS,
BALCOMBE,
Sept. 1882.





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CAESAR IN EGYPT.

DEDICATION TO FIRST EDITION.

TO

HIS LEARNED AND GENEROUS FRIEND

PROFESSOR GEORGE LONG

THE AUTHOR DEDICATES

'CAESAR IN EGYPT'

WITH GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE

ASSISTANCE DERIVED FROM

'THE DECLINE OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

AND MUCH VALUABLE COUNSEL



THE ARGUMENT.



CN. POMPEIUS, surnamed Magnus, after the disaster of Pharsalia, escaped, ultimately, to Egypt. He met Cornelia¹ at Lesbos, and sailed thence to Pelusium. He had good reason to reckon on influence and support in Egypt. During his second consulship, King Ptolemaeus 'Auletes' (father of the heirs to the Egyptian throne) was befriended by him at Rome. Auletes left the administration of his Will to the Roman Senate, depositing a copy with the Consul. Moreover, Pompeius ordered Gabinius, with a Roman force, to restore Auletes, when driven out of Egypt in B.C. 58. Two of the legions were left at Alexandria. On the other hand, the Egyptians assisted Pompeius in his last contest by sending ships, and otherwise. But the Alexandrines, having intelligence of his defeat and flight, from jealousy of Roman interference, caused his murder, at landing. Cornelia witnessed his death, and escaped with her son, Sextus Pompeius.

The Egyptians were in a state of anarchy. Pothinus (Governor), Achillas (General), and Theodotus of Chios

¹ His second wife, widow of Publius Crassus, a favourite general of Caesar, whose only daughter, Julia, was the first wife of Pompeius.

(Tutor), supported the young King, Ptolemaeus, in opposition to the Will, which directed that Cleopatra (the eldest child) should reign conjointly with, and wedded to, her brother. The Princess resisted, and was then, with her adherents, beyond Pelusium. Hence there was a civil war.

Miraculous events were pretended coincident with Caesar's victory at Pharsalia. In the Temple of Minerva at Elis, the image of Victory turned towards the portal; at Antioch, noises of fighting and trumpets; the same at Ptolemais; at Perganum, in the adytum of the temple, sounds of drums; in the Temple of Victory at Tralles, wherein a statue was consecrated to Caesar, a palm sprouted from between the stones of the floor.

When Caesar (with 2300 soldiers) reached Egypt, in the pursuit, he found that death had ended it. He was deeply affected on being told of the murder of Pompeius. He had, still, other and important interests on his own part. As, now, Consul, and Dictator, of Rome, it was his duty to administer the Will of Ptolemaeus Auletes. His natural disposition, too, was for justice. Therefore he did not hesitate to declare his wish for the joint sovereignty.

Caesar occupied that quarter of the city of Alexandria named Bruchesium, which extended towards the Sea. He lodged in the Palace with the King and his younger brother, and sister Arsinoë; Pothinus and Theodotus also; Achilles was with the army. The views of Caesar were avowedly opposed to those of the King and his ministers. Yet it was, obviously, the policy of the latter to simulate, for a while, respect and consideration for the Consul's wishes. But he had also demanded payment of the large debt due by Auletes to Rome and to himself, which, added to hatred of Roman intervention, caused him to be very unpopular with the Alexandrines. This feeling being displayed, Caesar sent into Asia for the legions there.

The Consul persisted in his views, and required Ptolemaeus to plead before him, to show on what grounds he refused to

admit his Sister to the throne, as directed by the Will. This angered the Ministers, and Caesar soon learned that Achilles was preparing to accomplish their design by force. The General had command of 20,000 foot and 2000 horse, besides the sympathy of the people, and possession of the City and open country.

While this state of things existed at Alexandria, Cleopatra rested with her little army. Reflecting on the situation, and how possibly to secure the favour and influence of Caesar in support of her sovereign rights, she resolved to present herself to him, and, by persuasion, with the addition of womanly graces, win him to her cause. Her age was then about twenty, and she is described as beautiful in person, witty and courageous, with pleasing manners, and melodious voice. In the execution of her project she was aided by Apollodorus, a devoted officer of her household, and, with him only, coasted from Pelusium into one of the embouchures of the Nile. Landing in disguise, she, folded in a sacking, was carried by Apollodorus into Caesar's apartment in the Palace, and there laid on a couch. The Consul soon after entered alone, observed the figure on the couch, removed the veil, and, for the first time, beheld her features. He commanded that the Queen should be suitably cared for, and guarded. After this, he insisted, more than ever, on the reconciliation of brother and sister, and on the fulfilment of the directions regarding them in the Will—with seeming success, so far, that there was a banquet to ratify the arrangement.

But Pothinus and his party furtively opposed this purpose. It is said that Caesar's barber discovered a plot. At this time Princess Arsinoë fled to Achilles, and assumed royal authority.

The Consul then persuaded Ptolemaeus to send, as ambassadors, two distinguished men, Dioscorides and Serapion, both of whom had been in the confidence of his Father. Achilles, without parley, ordered them to be executed. On

this, Caesar secured the King, and decreed the death of Pothinus.

Caesar was now fully on his defence, and had to send for ships and soldiers. Achillas advanced in open war, and besieged that quarter of the city occupied by the Romans. Water cisterns were rendered brackish by the enemy; he had to make wells, and in every way to exert his wonderful abilities to maintain his position. He was in great danger, and suffered some defeats. Yet he succeeded in taking the Island and Tower of Pharos, with the Heptastadium,—the mole which connected the island with the city,—and burnt many of the Egyptian ships. During this struggle, the famous Alexandrian Library was accidentally destroyed by fire.

Princess Arsinoë, being still with the Egyptian army, quarrelled with Achillas, accomplished his death, and appointed Ganymedes, the eunuch under whose care she had been educated, General of the army. He proved himself to be a very able man. After an interval of cabal and intrigue between the two parties, the Alexandrines, finding that the Romans were so difficult to conquer, offered friendship to Caesar, on condition of his releasing the King, whom they said they preferred to Arsinoë, and would obey. Wishing to conciliate them, and thinking that the concession would scarcely increase their power, he gave up the King. Ptolemaeus parted from him with pretended regret, and with the warmest expressions of affection; but, immediately after, headed the army, and recommenced operations against the Romans, so well, that they were put to some disadvantage. Cleopatra remained, under the guardianship of Caesar, at the Palace.

The Egyptian fleet was in great strength at Canopus; the army invested the quarter of Bruchesium. Caesar had received reinforcements, and was thereby enabled to hold his ground. He appointed Tiberius Nero admiral, with the brave Rhodian, Euphranor, under him. His fleet contended

against the Egyptians with partial success, but with the loss of Euphranor.

At this crisis, Caesar received a message from Mithridates of Pergamum, that, having reached Pelusium with an army, he had fought there a successful battle with the Egyptians. No time was lost in making arrangements to go to his support. Meanwhile he had taken Pelusium, and advanced towards Alexandria. Caesar, with great ingenuity and boldness, fought his way out, and joined his ally on the Delta.

Then the final encounter. The Egyptians had advanced to meet Mithridates, and had commenced the attack, when the Romans approached by land and sea. For some time victory wavered ; till Caesar made a desperate onslaught on their camp, which resulted in a complete rout ; and the King, in attempting to escape to a ship, was drowned. His Sister, Arsinoë, remained a prisoner with the Romans.

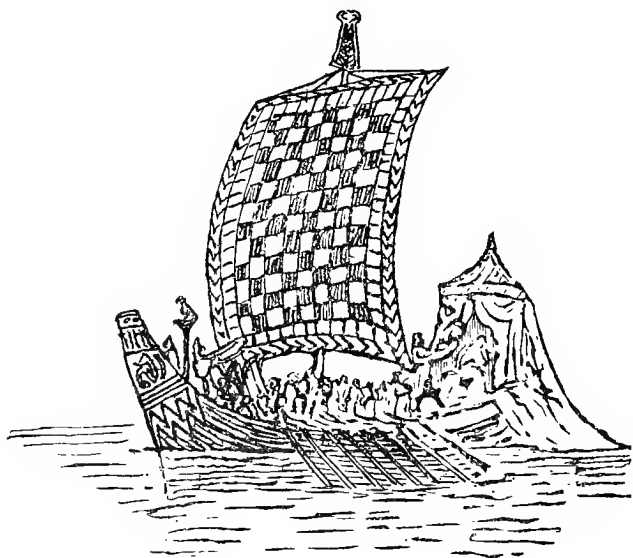
After this engagement, the Alexandrines submitted ; and Caesar established Cleopatra on the throne, coupled with her younger brother, then but a boy :—thus fulfilling his duty as executor (for Rome) of the Will of Auletes.

Peace having been restored, the Consul lingered for about three months, regulating the affairs of Egypt. Nor did he let that interval pass unemployed for increase of knowledge, and for recreation, after his severe trials and distresses, which had brought him almost to despair. The lost books of Appian on Egypt contained the particulars of Caesar's progress up the Nile with Cleopatra. In that journey, so far as to the first cataract (the limit of Egypt), he would see most of the wonderful remains, ancient to them, as to us,—Memphis and Thebes, Heliopolis, the Pyramids, the Memnon, the Sphinx, the cities of Lake Moeris, Syéne, and the romantic island Elephantiné. In Cleopatra, he had a companion whose wit and spirit were congenial with his disposition.

But Caesar could not too long forget Rome,—his cheif mistress. Returning to Alexandria, he promptly and re-

solutely consolidated the authority of the Queen. Taking the sixth legion with him to Syria,—there to oppose Pharnaces,—he left the rest of his Roman force at Alexandria to support Cleopatra.

Successful campaigns in Syria, Africa, and Spain, were followed by a Triumph, at Rome, for the Alexandrine War, two conspicuous objects therein being the Princess Arsinoë, and a camelopard (or giraffe), then for the first time seen in Europe. This may be viewed as the closing scene of a very interesting, and too little regarded, episode in the career of CAIUS JULIUS CAESAR.





Caesar in Egypt.

PART THE FIRST.

So while away the ages,—come, and gone
Monuments voices have ;—the later arts
Yield livelier records of the silent Past.
Pile up the relics ! print the letter'd page
In multiples unreckon'd, till, entranced,
We see the wither'd centuries, embalm'd,
And, as in fossil or in crystal shown,
The disembodied Mind :—in vain ! in vain !
Mind is Itself, alone ; emotion springs
As fountain newly from the riven rock.
Yea, like the petal wakening to the Sun,
The Soul that cometh hath inheritance
Coeval ranking with the birth of Time.
Yet do we fondly ween, if passion moved,
So passion kindles now ; and, thus assured,
Live, in vicarious ecstasy, somewhiles,
The life of Men foregone, conceive their acts,
And feel their mental wounds.

Pompeius Magnus !
Who, as a Palace in a Fortress, stood—
In strength or splendour equal,—at one stroke
Bared of its boastful beauties,—so he fell.

Pharsalia lost ! how but to die or fly ?
'What, even to the ramparts do they come ?
Ah, my Cornelia ! now at Lesbos waiting,
Waiting to greet me Emperor of the World.
Take off my armour,—take that purple robe,
And bring me russet of the peasant sort.
As least that came of greatest ! let me go.'

And, thus, he went, through woods and coverts
winding,
First to Larissa, fair Thessalia's pride,—
Cradle of Thetis' son, Achilles, erst,
Nor far from where Olympus towers to heaven ;—
Then on through Tempe, to the poets dear,
And to the strand whereat, by dream forewarn'd,
Peticius, from his bark, Pompeius hail'd ;
And, with Favonius and the Lentuli,
To Lesbos bore him. Of Cornelia's grief,—
Why tell what every human heart doth know ?
But now—he would the conqueror's hand evade ;
To Libya, to Parthia, or to Egypt ?
Pompeius Magnus ! could he then o'erlook
Egypt's indebtedness?—to Cyprus next,
Thence to Pelusium and the new boy-King.
A Dæmon, doubtless, led him to that shore !

Attended poorly, came the vanquished one ;
His ships but few, his men two thousand told.
The one-time arbiter is suppliant now :
Whereat the fiend, Ingratitude, took form.
Urged by Pothinus, eunuch, misanthrope,
And hater,—hating most the man most loved !
Accurst Septimius, striking from behind,
Achillas following with a soldier's aim,

Him reft of life whom legions could not kill.
Thus died the Hero in Cornelia's sight,
Her swooning shriek resounding to the shore !
Her guardians, hastily, the anchor weigh'd,
And, with young Sextus, of Pompeius scion,
Convey'd her, grieving, to a friendlier land.

Gallant Pompeius ! strong of arm and loin,
Of curly crown and merry countenance,
Giant in muscle, or of body or brain,
Charmer of women and men, the paramount,
Save one—of loftier zenith !—must it be,
By the strict canon of pre-eminence,
To pale and fall before the brighter star,—
Desert the world, to make, for Caesar, space ?

Lo, on that day of strife unparallel'd,
The ghostly spheres were moved to visible signs.
At Elis, in Minerva's sacred Fane,
(Elis, the sanctuary of the nations round,)
The Phidian image to the portal turn'd ;
At Antioch, Ptolemais, Pergămum,
The temples rang with superhuman sounds
Of drums and trumpets, and the crash of war.
At Tralles, shrine of Caesar's effigy,
A palm-tree sprung, full-leaf'd, from stony floor.

Then Caius Julius, first and greatest Caesar,
Becomes the Monarch of all humankind.
Not yet ! for, from Pharsalia's hateful fray,—
Where, with insensate rage, the gods of Earth,
To Roman, Roman, friend and brother strove,
Despising death, to prove that *One* must reign,—
Vanish'd Pompeius ! whither—whither gone ?

To Egypt onward ! scorn the scatter'd hosts,—
Which like evaporate clouds again condense,—
Speed on to find the famous fugitive,
In ruin strong—with magic in his name !
To find—too late, alas !—his trunkless head :
Too late to conquer, and too late to save !

The end assured, to Rome the Consul sent,
And, his o'erbrimming heart relieving, wrote,
' The crowning comfort of my victory rests—
To pardon Romans by mishap my foes.'

And Caesar wept—such tears as must be true,
His Julia's husband, and his dearest friend !
Dry—dry the tears ! men cannot work and weep ;
And now is urgent, vital work to do.

King Ptolemaeus, his last Testament
Committed, haply to secure its aim,
To Roma's Senate—as a sacred trust.
This was Auletes, him the Piper, named.
Sometime deposed, he had been guest at Rome,
And to Pompeius, Cato, and Gabinius,
Owed, by advice and War's arbitrament,
Safe re-instatement to his regal power.
Owed he, moreover, cash to divers Romans,
Including Caesar, who, sole Ruler now,
Remain'd, for Rome, his representative.

The Consul, (knowing not Pompeius' death,—
On Romans counting, by Gabinius left,)
To Alexandria came, with slender force,
And as a King,—a King of Men,—the City
In regal progress, with his Lictors, enter'd,

Fasces before him,—and the people frown'd :
' Pompeius now no more, why still confess
Roma's authority ? ' Stern, Caesar strode,
Following his bold and trusty messengers,
The Royal Alexandrine House unto.
There Ptolemaeus, and the Prince cadet,
Arsinoë, Princess, Sister of the Queen,
And grim Pothinus, Eunuch-Minister,
Him met with smiles and simulate honesty ;—
And there, with cool and courteous dignity,
Abided he in well-pretended strength.

And, soon, he said, ' By King Auletes' Will,
The Princess and the Prince conjoint must reign.'
Pothinus, with design not all unwise,
Forestall'd the Salique law ; full well aware
That Cleopatra could his craft outreach !
The Consul urged, ' It is Auletes' Will,
By Rome held sacred, must accomplish'd be.'
Whereon Pothinus, in dissemblance deft,
Bent low the knee—' Behold ! a judgment just.'
So far assented, Caesar press'd his suit
For monies due to Romans, for himself
Of more than half-a-million sterling pounds. •
Pothinus bent the knee, gave monies, yet,
Among his friends, made pleasure of his scorn,
In multiplied indignities ; ' Deprived !
Had only delf—all silver vessels sold
To yield the requisition ; ' clamour'd citizens,
Against the impost raised to pay the debt.
Pothinus prosper'd in a fool's delight,
Whilst Caesar sent for legions,—far away !

And while Pothinus plotted, Caesar thought,—

On surface smooth to Minister or King ;
And, in this lull of rest, gave bland command,—
‘ I would the wonders of this City see,
Design’d by him the Great of Macedon,
Built at whose hest by skill’d Dinocrates ;—
Myself survey the Works whereof I read.’
He saw the Soma which ‘ the body ’ held,—
‘ The body ’ term’d, with just significance,—
Of him the founder,—Conqueror of the World ;—
At thought of whom he, once, had grieved to tears,
That other man surpass’d him in renown !
He saw Serapis’ Temple, and the Tower
Of that ingenious schemer, Sostratus,
On Pharos raised, (with Beacon-fire,) led to
By Heptastadium ; and the Docks and channels
The Palace nearing (with belligerent view) ;
The Catacombs yclept Necropolis ;
Poseidon’s Temple, to the seamen dear ;
The vast Emporium, (to Canopus lost ;)
Gymnasium, Stadium, Amphitheatre,—
Pan’s Temple, on the hill-top towering ;—
The Hippodrome,—the subterranean Cisterns :
But more than all did Caesar’s cultured mind
Rejoice beholding that Museum famed,
Well-spring of learning—scroll on scroll up-piled—
Of science and philosophy much loved,—
And nursery of the men who him had taught.
Ah ! little thought he, by his act to perish.

Meantime Queen Cleopatra,—self-styled Queen,—
Watch’d, with her scant adherents, from afar,
Beyond Pelusium, in some strength encamp’d,—
By resolute Achillas held at bay,—
The peril knowing, and yet undismay’d.

Was she not daughter of a line of kings?
No moment yielding to a craven mind,
As born a Queen,—a Queen she meant to be.
Of all the Cleopatras faméd most,
Or Alexander's sister,—made a bride
On Philip's fatal day ; or she the wife
Of royal Ceneus' son, doomed Meleager ;
Who, wasting slow, by magic spell accurst,
For hopeless love of Atalanta died.
Like all high spirits, as self-counsellor
In things of import grave, she reason'd thus—
' Comes Caesar, mission'd by the gods for me !
He has decreed, and justly, must I own,
My brother me should wed—the paltry boy !
For me, alack ! no mate—it shall not be.
I reign alone, and wed me where I love.
My champion Caesar comes ! how gain I him ? '

In thought entranced, the Queen uprose, transfix'd,
Her hands on high, by fingers interlock'd,
With lips compress'd, and look of firm intent ;—
Then, disapparelling, unwittingly
Turn'd to the speculum her faultless limbs,
And, at her image glancing, fancy-fired,
Sank couchant, to voluptuous slumber given.
Sleep rests not on the spirit at unrest ;—
' What can I offer Caesar ? he is mighty !
Hath fame and wealth, and, in the name of Rome,
Commands the world. What *can* I give to Caesar ? '

Succeeds a waking dream,—Ambition's dream !
Expanding, warming—melting into sleep.
Fresh as the floweret to the eye of day,
Woke Cleopatra to her phantasie,—

In dream of sleep to resolute purpose grown.
Well did she too her thoughts impersonate ;—
Of goddess' visage, lit with eyes of fire,
And brain that kept them burning, and of form
Instinct with dignity and Queenly grace,—
Meet incarnation of her dreadful soul !
Like a fair column set alone, she stood
Revolving her design.

‘What man of mark,
A man with me to match, will disregard
A woman young and fair, that one a Queen,—
That Queen a Cleopatra—him the least,
Of men the greatest? Caesar needeth nought—
What *can* I give him, then,—but Cleopatra?—
If to be lorded, let my first lord be
The man of men who rears above them all ;—
Queen Cleopatra Cleopatra gives ;
That only one !—so must he yield, and place
Me on my throne.’

Clang-clang ! clang-clang ! the cymbals ;
Dames attend : composed, with gracious gesture
Greeting, she welcomes them ; would fain conceal
Her passionate temper, wrought by schemes untold ;
Dissimulates, with pleasant irony, and says,
‘They are too anxious and too loving much.’
The tiring done, luxuriant tresses plaited,
The jewels and the perfumes minister'd,
She bids them, parting, ‘send Apollodorus.’
He, readily, proud of the royal missive,
Bound to the Queen in fealty, instant came.

Seated, in royal robe, as Queen of Egypt,

Spake Cleopatra,—‘ Friend Apollodorus,
Thou knowest well my straits ; my army weak,
Achillas traps me, and Pothinus dire
Hates me, as eunuch should ; then what to do ?
The Queen of Egypt,—and I will be Queen !—
Thou see’st that Caesar, noble though he be,
Rules, in observance of my Father’s whim,
To wed me with that boy, to have me reign
In couples ! this, Pothinus and Achillas
Alike resist,—and I am with them there !
’Tis hard, contending with a Testament,—
It loathes me quite ! thenceforth must I contend ;
Despite of them, and Caesar, I shall reign.
The Consul knows me not—to him I go :
Nay, shrink not ! for, with *thee* I to him speed.
Trusty Apollodorus, can’st thou doubt
I will succeed in that I machinate ?
Caesar is mortal man, though like a god
In force and eminence, and I will be
The grandest woman of this God-made Earth,
Of this world’s victor, victor,—with one arm,
Will rout Pothinus and his dastard crew.
Now listen well, my friend, the while I tell
Particulars of my arch stratagem.
Thou hast some friends in the Palace,—learn from them
The Consul’s goings out, and comings in ;
This done, we coast in menial guise, by night,
Unto the gate of my ancestral home,—
The princely City of the Ptolemies,—
Where, my Apollodorus, I shall dwell.
A friend worth having must be strong and brave,
And thou art strong of heart and limb I know—
Thou can’st and wilt, whereto I bid, me carry,—
Even to Caesar’s chamber ; start not so !

I'll tell thee how anon ; but leave me there,—
The rest is mine to do.'

As vassal leal,
In purpose firm, whate'er the venture prove,
Apollodorus bow'd, obeisant, saying,—
'Be it so,' quickly went, and soon return'd,—
To tell, 'O Queen ! the project is prepared.'
The next still eve they sped, in tiny skiff,
Muffled and mask'd ; watchful, the verges nearing
Of the Internum, next Egyptus' shores,
Past the seven mouths of Nile, to port of Pharos,
Whereat, unseen, they landed,—to proceed
Along the Mole, along the dusky streets
Of busy Alexandria ; there, foretold,
Apollodorus promptly placed the Queen,
In covert safe, for rest and sustenance.
He to the Palace, she to think her part,
And, after sleep, the bath, and then to braid
Her raven tresses, to the cincture falling,
And clothe her fair for Caesar. Well she knew
To make perfection perfect, and the art
To win :

Ere long Apollodorus came.
'What more, my Queen ? I but exist for thee.'
And Cleopatra thank'd him by a smile !
'Quail not, brave heart ! I'll guide thee what to do ;
Am I attiréd as befits a Queen ?'
Beholding, all abash'd,—her dazzling beauty
Scarce seeing in the radiance that it shed,—
E'en as the Sun, too bright, a darkness brings,—
Bending, he utter'd low, 'Thou art my Queen.'
Then Cleopatra, in fierce hope exultant,—

‘Swathe me, Apollodorus, as I lie,
In coarsest canvas, as some merchandise,—
For it is custom, delicate things to hide
In rude outcovering,—straightway with thine arms,
Thy muscular limbs, transport me, till I rest
The rightful tenant of my Royal House,
Nor less than occupant of Caesar’s Room.’
Effray’d, obedient, bold Apollodorus
Inwrapp’d her gently, and, with tender grasp,
On to his shoulder raised her, and, away !

In garb of slave, his precious burthen bearing,
Quick, heeding none, his devious course he threads,
As one with fixed intent, who goes his way.
The Palace knew he, and the Greek slaves there
Cared not to stay him. Caesar, then in council,
Apollodorus found, as pre-design’d,
The Sanctum void ; and next, the curtains shut,
Soft, on a silken couch, the Queen disposed.
With timorous hands, and palpitating pulse,
As o’er a lovely flower, constrain’d to leave
Its perfume and its petals unimpair’d,—
The rough envelopment he then unroll’d
From off her dainty members, folding her
Closely in mantle rich, of royal woof ;
And so she, bound in the brocaded coil,
Lay, as a mummy waiting for the tomb,—
Only the face unshrouded. Spake She then,—
‘Veil me, Apollodorus, then depart,—
Thee I forget not,—to my people say
Their Queen is soon to reign,—they have my blessing !’
With lowly crest retiring,—backwardly,
Apollodorus, mutely, draped the door,
And fled the Palace.

All is silent now.

Listening for footfall, Cleopatra drowsed ;
And, drowsing, hears, eftsoons, a manly tread,
Soldierly, measured—yes ! it must be He.
The Consul enter'd, in disrobing pensive—
Next, slowly walk'd, and walk'd, and presently
With sharp glance mark'd an object new and strange.
Thy nerves fail not, great Caesar,—‘ What is this ? ’
Observing, curiously, the regal vesture,
He, statue-like, the dormant figure scann'd.
(His towering forehead, his far-searching eye,
His firm-set lip, that, voiceless, could command.)
The while he thought, and thought, impassively—
Then, with a cautious hand displaced the veil,
And met, full blaze, two black, refulgent eyes,
In passion or intelligence supreme !
The placid countenance, immobile, spake,—
Not to the outward ear,—the world is hush'd !
Gazing, turn'd Caesar—turning, gazed again ;
Then utter'd in deep tone, ‘ Thou ? Cleopatra.’
A moment's pause,—the sunny cheeks grew sunnier,
Flash'd forth fresh sparkles the significant eyes,
The ruby, pouting lips to sweet tone parted,—
Pronouncing only, ‘ Caesar.’ Then is silence.

As a huge mountain in the Earthquake-shock,
The frame of Caesar quiver'd ; yet no sign
That the full-throbbing heart its pulses found.—
The soul that, dauntless, had confronted death,
Dissolved to weakness by a woman's smile !
With dumb respect, and kingly dignity
Raised he the Queen,—unfolded her, demure,
Placed her enthroned, and with a knightly bow
Sat at decorous distance.

‘Royal Lady,

Yes,—I am Caesar,—needless to declare
That thou art Cleopatra,—other none ;
Less than myself, could that result divine.
Yet, may he humbly ask, how cam’st thou here,—
What may he do, of good, for her so fair ?’
Commenced the Queen,—‘Great Caesar, King of
Men,
Thou knowest my distress ;—Executor
Of Ptolemaeus, King, would’st have me reign
In wedded link with that young brother-boy !
Say’st thou it is his Will ?—it is not mine !
Wed not I with the stripling ! even though
Pothinus and Achillas not oppose—
Even though Caesar says it shall so be !
Am not I First of Egypt ? so to wive,
No Queenship other than the Slave of slaves.
In thy told purpose, Consul, thou art just,
But know’st not Cleopatra,—she is here !—
The Queen of Egypt am I, and will reign ;
Mate I with equals,—may with Caesar mate,—
Elect my Knight, my ægis, and my Jove !’

With lengthened pause, reflective,—‘Well thou
speakest,
And in thy Regal bearing, Regal spirit,
Should’st, in mere justice, win thy way to power,
The Queen of beauty, as by birth a Queen.
Yet, above all desires, my Mistress chief
Is Rome,—no matter ; let it rest to-day ;
To-morrow shall we find what course is best.’

Then Cleopatra, seeing she had gain’d,
Her manner easing to a genial humour

Jubilant, radiant—smiling, ‘Yea, my King !
 Thy mistress Rome of me precedence takes !
That I accord, ungrieved ; thy mistress Rome
 Exacts obedience ; Egypt prays thy help.
 Be love and duty equal in regard.
 What Cleopatra pleads is Woman’s plea,—
 The feeble to the strong one, who controls
 The hundred Nations,—who may add to these
 Egypt in Cleopatra,—when she reigns !’

‘Sweet Sorceress ! sweetly conquer,—better so,
 Than I to overcome—where I would not !
 Yet would I conquer, only to obtain
 Sole sway, with love’s subjection,—in thy heart.
 Thou shalt establish’d be,—though men may say
 Thou do’st prevail o’er him who doth prevail.
 For, less the halo of the Crown of Egypt,
 Thy Scer foretells that, to the end, thou wilt
 Prevail as Cleopatra.’

Caesar rose,
 Elate,—a courtly gallant ! kiss’d her palm,
 (Holding the taper fingers wistfully.)
 Whereat she laugh’d exuberant,—and, unthinking,
 Clapp’d hands for joy : this, taken for a call,
 Brought in attendants, him, the Quæstor, one ;
 To whom the Consul, nearing, drily said,
 ‘Guard well this Lady,—for she is the Queen ;—
 Conduct her to the Matrons, let them care
 To lodge her Royally : my order this !’
 The Quæstor sign’d assent, and Cleopatra
 Moving, (with stately reverence to all,)
 Dumbly, him following, went.

Along the floor,—
Chromatic, tessellate with marbles rare,—
Pacing, on-pacing with uncounted steps,
As one who finds new pabulum for thought,—
Caesar, somehow irresolute, suddenly
Summon'd his officers.

The morning next,
Met with Pothinus and his royal ward,
Unchanged, he urged the reconciliation due
In prosecution of Auletes' Will,—
True to his duty as Executor.
Pothinus temporized,—in form agreed—
Moreover, to a banquet for that day,
Whereat in proud array shone Cleopatra,
Herself a Queen, though yet, of Egypt not.
The King, nor true, nor wholly confident,
Accomplish'd Alexandrine, in deceit,
Lean'd to Pothinus and Theödotus,
[Or Minister or Tutor, of one mind,]
Yet feigned consent to Cleopatra's claims.
Here Caesar said, 'But Ptolemaeus shall
Make manifest his right to reign alone ;
Auletes' Will is Law, myself am Rome.'
At this Pothinus, anger'd, made cabal,
And, with the General, Achilles, leagued,
His mandate to the army reckless sent,
By land and sea, Bruchesium to invest.

Caesar, still earnest for a friendly close,—
His armaments unequal to resist,—
Ambassadors despatch'd, the King's best friends,
(Serapion, Dioscorides, men of mark,)
To parley with Achilles, who, uncaring,
Said—'They shall die !'

Then must great Rome's Dictator
Signalize Rome. The Alexandrines proud,
In numbers, horse and foot, munitions, strong,—
(Some, Roman soldiers of Gabinus' erst,)
May not be openly fronted : fortify
The Palace ; guard well or fort, or harbour ;
Inspire the soldiers to their staunchest valour,
Or win by strategy where force might fail.
Now were Pothinus and the boy-King held
In durance ; bold Achilles bolder grows,
Surrounds the Palace, in his pride ascendant !
'Will he not vanquish whom the greatest vanquish'd ?
The slayer of Pompeius, Caesar slay ?'
In vain the onslaught !—to the Harbour now !
The fleet ablaze ! and soon the dreadful firebrands
By Æolus wafted—to the City spread,
And then, alas ! that treasure-house of wisdom,
Library unvalued—of the world most prized,
Is wrapt in flame ! Who dares such loss compute ?
Who disinter the thoughts that ended then ?
Will genius regenerate à conceit,
A once evolvéd germ be born again ?
There went destruction of immortal parts,
Even as the burning of the souls of men.
Then, with resistless ardour, sallied Caesar,
Seized Pharos' tower, and gave it garrison,
Storm'd the strong places to Bruchesium nigh,
And, for the nonce, Achilles kept aloof.

During that day of perturbation dread,
Whilst, in the doubtful fray, confusion ruled,—
Princess Arsinoë to Achilles went,
And, with inherent Ptolemaic spirit,
Assumed the regal power,—and title, too ;

For that shrewd General felt his own defect
Of true authority, to popular view,
By Caesar's wise detention of the King.
And, at this time, Pothinus, manifest
In traitorous league with the Egyptian camp,—
The Consul doom'd him to a felon's fate.

Whate'er the force of Cleopatra's charm,—
And heroes do not beauty underprize,—
Caesar, astute, energetic, press'd the war,—
For now indeed a war, against his wish.
To Rhodes, Cilicia, Syria,—for fleets ;
To Crete for archers ; e'en to Nabathaea,
(King Malchus, of the line of Ismael,)
For cavalry. Meanwhile, the outworks guarded,—
Intrenchment, bastion, gabion, all devices
For safety indispensable are done.
Yet was there danger nigh to hopelessness,
Shut out from land, from sea prevented much,
His cisterns render'd brackish,—so, he might
Heed the misgiving murmurs, doubt himself.
But he was Roman, and with Romans join'd.
'Sink wells,' he said : 'retreat before these caitiffs ?
Forget not Rome ! bring in Pompeius' Legion !'

Arsinoë, having caused Achillas' death,
Made Ganymed General, sagaciously—
For with much art he strove, in tactics quick,
To baffle, and prevail ; untrammelled he,
With multitudinous host,—his foe pent in,
Obstruction either side, entrapped and caged ;
The city, like a cliff too straight to climb,
The Harbour block'd and patroll'd ceaselessly.

So thus, the Romans break away to Sea ;
There too, in strength, is Ganymed ; and Caesar,
In paltry squabble, perils his repute,—
As hero-born, the same for small or large,—
Confronts the chance, whate'er the odds, to gain.
The strife is hot,—the Consul's ship surrounded,
For life swam he, his scarlet chlamys losing,—
His tablets bearing,—with a charmed life !
He masters,—and the Alexandrines quail,
(Craven at sight of Roman fortitude—)
Appealing to him,—‘ Give us back our King,
We love nor Ganymed, nor Arsinoë ;
Let us but have the King, and there is peace.’
The Consul, reckoning his legions near,
Delay advised, preferr'd at worst to strive,
Though with a beardless King, if that must be,
Instead to combat with a headless herd,
Whom to discomfit were inglorious,
Whom to be beaten by left honour none.
Then went he, Ptolemaeus streaming tears,—
Egyptian tears, unreal and unimpassion'd,
As those their crocodiles' ; he ‘ could not go,—
Esteem'd to live with Caesar more than all
The rights of kingship : ’ yet he sped, and soon
Unmask'd his nature,—like a tiger-whelp
Freed from the toils ; and, in few-counted days,
Made clear his motive—threw away the mask.
The tears that falsely had been tears of joy,
Were, prematurely shed, his tears of woe !

Caesar, in pauses sweet of leisure strain'd,
With Cleopatra honey'd counsel held.
Amid such dangers, well it was to have

So fair a Chancellor,—withal so wise !
Taught in Egyptian wiles, adept in craft,
Did she unthread the tangles of their schemes,
And circumvent their projects ; knew she not
Methods and men of Egypt ? who outwits
Egyptian like Egyptian ? land or sea,
Leader or follower, every trick of war,
To her apt cognizance, not idly shown.
Expert in tongues, she could, with tact, discourse
To divers races, their intrigues to learn.

The King away, free, Cleopatra breathes !
And thus, at ease, the storm awhile becalm'd,
For fit reception of the Consul cares.
With fervent eyes, as one in trance o'erjoy'd,
With light imbued, her soul to love resign'd,
Array'd in raiment fine, of silver tissue,
Anklets and armlets, serpent-like, of gold,
Her white, well-moulded bosom half display'd,
Fair neck begemm'd,—yea, jewels laid on jewels,—
Her ebon hair abundant, braided part,
And partly flowing,—proudly Egypt's Queen
Awaits his advent ; list ! his footstep sounds,—
A sound familiar grown !

Both hands held forth,
'Welcome ! thrice welcome to my heart, O Caius,—
Timely consenting to release their King,—
He now their King—I, soon, their Queen to be
Nor will my praise be poorer, when I tell
'Twas I their errand prompted—dost thou frown ?
Was it not well ?—nay, blame me guardfully,—
For thou hast done the thing *I* pre-ordain'd,—
Design'd to practise Cleopatra's thought !

Thou art my King ;—I, thy prime Counsellor,
Have disentangled thee,—as time will show.
The foolish boy, on sole dominion set,
Will head against thee the Egyptian host,
Thy rival he, and Roma's enemy !
Then what becomes of that vain Testament ?'
Her arms outstretching, laugh'd she,—Caesar laugh'd,
In chorus sympathetic, and impassion'd,—
Distracted in loving admiration—said,
' Bright flower of Egypt ! reigning in my heart,—
As thou do'st say that Caius is thy King ;
He had thy view, but told thee not, for love ;
Wish'd to be chided by thee, bear thy gibes,
To gain the rapture of thine after-praise,
Forsooth, when telling things thou didst foreknow !
Ah !—Charmer fair,'—then rising to her eyes,
In those ink-mirrors his own face he found
Reflected—

' Cleopatra, *I am* there !

It is myself,—to be Caesarion named,
The Son of Caesar—King of Kings unborn ;
Of Cleopatra born—a Son shall be !'
Then, in the glow of love's beatitude,
Embraced her, murmuring fondly, ' We have loved,
And it is strange that the divided years
Do not ill-match us ; such thy Caius was—
His fate accomplishing, in manhood's prime,—
Strong in the greed of empire ; so art thou !
Bating not hope that, whatsoe'er the baulks,
Thou'rt born to reign,—and thought he so, thy
King !

Yet, dearest dear, the striving is not done,
Nor past the peril,—but we *must* prevail,—
" For Cleopatra, Caesar !" now the cry.'

Gladden'd, inspired, she, the incomparable,
At instant impulse, close enfolded him :
' Mine earthly Jove ! look at me, kiss me thrice,
That thou may'st love me to thy heart's content,
Be with me quite, for now and evermore :
Thou hast risk'd greatly for me ; I am proud,
Beyond my kindred pride of Ptolemy,
To be enlinked with him, the grandest Man ;
Must—must we part ? thy Mistress Rome for thee !
Thy Queen,—lone Mistress—Mistress, lost her lord !'

The Consul, gently loosing, gravely then—
' Let each be great,—I, as of Rome the Ruler,
(For so again have they their choice proclaimed,)
Or thou, of this fair region, which I more
With thee would search, this brawl ignoble past.
Then will we visit Egypt's far confines,
Love more and more each time we meet or part ;
More loving, part, perchance, to meet no more !'
With drooping forehead Cleopatra, silent,
The chamber quitted, as o'ercome with grief,—
Caesar attending, to the gates of Sleep.

Though hours fly gaily, Time the future broods,
And utmost stillness bodes the impending storm ;—
Yet, in such pause of quiet we relax,
And quaff and laugh, oblivious of our cares.
Nor did those easeful hours quite fruitless pass
With Cleopatra ; she, at eve reclining,
In pensive mood :

' My Caius, happy now,
We may forewarn of things that next will be.
Some notice have I from my native friends
That soon the leaven of our brother King,—

Which you or I, or both,—nay tell not either !—
Have thrown among that ill-assorted host,
Will breed a ferment difficult to stay.
Guard well thy ships, watch well thy water-ways,
Or they will starve us, like a rat shut in.'

Then Caesar, cheerly, with approving sign,
'Sage as fair Mentor ! it is order'd now ;
Their schemes know I, yet value what thou say'st ;
To-morrow will our Fleet be fully arm'd,
The brave Euphranor, Captain unsurpassed,
Tiberius Nero, General in command.
Though they exceed us much in ships and men,
By higher spirit we shall overcome,
And thou, enthroned, wilt, with me, glory share.'

'My King ! forgive me, woman, fain to know
More than thou knowest,—for the stake is mine ;
If I preserve the courage of my race,
Would I not succour thee, at any cost,
And prove me Cleopatra ? Young she is,
Yet dares she now to die for greater life,
Or thrice to die Caesarion to give !'

Beyond himself exalted, Caesar rose,
To clasp her, saying, ' Have no dread, my love,
Be sure Caesarion shall protected be,—
Unborn or born, be safe, and comforted
In thy maternal soul's serenity ;
So, to the shield of Caesar keep thy faith.'

At dawning hour the sounds of contest ring ;
First with the Navy,—for, along the night,
With warning message had the scouts returned.

The Egyptian sallies forth, in hostile form,
To seize the Transports ; Romans out to sea ;
The Fleet, well armed, attack at break of day—
The vessels rescue, less Euphranor, lost—
In death.

Now Fortune smiles on Rome ;
For Mithridates, styled of Pergänum,
Whom Caesar sometime sent in search of succours,
(A constant friend, deserving of report,)
Had, with his gather'd force, Pelusium gain'd,—
(The barrier strong 'twixt Syria and Egypt,—
By foresight of the wise Achillas arm'd;)—
That fortress storm'd, and the Egyptian foil'd.
Egypt had entries dual—one from sea,
By Pharos, and from land,—Pelusium ;
Both, now, the Roman's. Onward, Mithridates !
Still, as he went, subduing.

To the fray
The Consul, parting, doubtful comfort takes :
'Now, love, adieu ! I leave thee—for the Camp !
My chance is equal, though the war be small.
It is the law of Fate,—to satisfy
The world's demand ; fair Queen, for *thee* I go,—
And for myself,—for true it is to say
That I *must* do it ; sorrow some to know,
And motive much to urge, that thy success
Is in the hazard,—ill the gods forefend !
Yet, if I die,—then, love, for thee I die :
Go thou to Mithridates,—he has virtue,
For Caesar's sake, will guard thee ;—failing that,
To Carsulenus ; those I shall instruct.
The while, Rome needs me ;—though the rapturous
beam

That from thee flows, is as the draught of Lethe,—
With no more wavering, must I close this feud,
To save, if then to lose thee,—first to save !’

‘Caius, thy love is proven ! have full faith
That she thou lovest,—whatsoe’er betide,
Will not dishonour thee ; herefrom I watch ;
Here is my eyrie, whence, with eagle-eye,
Anent the counsels of their King I search,
To aid thy politic measures : oh, come back !
Add to thine honours, if in glory least,
“Of Cleopatra Saviour !” Kiss me, dear,
And say thou *wilt* return !’

Now pitiless war !

Young Ptolemaeus, mustering horse and foot,
The Delta neared, confronting Mithridates,
(‘Delta,’ as like that letter, circumscribed,
A fertile plain, too fair for battle field !)
And, in the first encounters, had the worst.
Yet did the balance tremble ; the Egyptian
In rich estate, and force numerical.
This Caesar knowing, with profound intent,—
(Their army gone, their Fleet, too, on the Nile,
To aid their army),—sped, in strength, by sea,
And, with slight hindrance, landed, so to join
His co-adjutor,—super-adding Caesar !
Against Egyptian, Roman, arm to arm,
The contest desperate—the issue final.
Shall Rome, at such, be conquer’d ? The Egyptian
To test extreme his skill and valour goaded,
Sometimes o’ermaster’d,—victory delay’d.
Then Julius—‘ To their Camp ! no more diversion,—
Attack their ramparts straight, and round them too !

My Carsulenus, take thy troop up there,
That bulwark seize, and let them know thou hast it,
Whilst I, below, direct our strategy.'
A dreadful struggle—hither, thither, where?
Dismay'd, the Egyptians wildly seek their ships,—
Their King, a fugitive, amid the herd,
The river gains, and, with the herd, is drown'd.
So it is done ! the Alexandrine war,
Portending Caesar failure and reproach,
Begot him gladness, and access of fame.

Zephyrus with swiftest wing, and balmiest breath,
To Cleopatra brought the word sublime
That made her Egypt's Queen : a Mother now,—
For at this season was Caesarion born,—
A mother, of a Caesar mother first !
She knew the ecstasy of hopes fulfill'd,—
Love and ambition in the climax met !
Beholding, blest, her infant's conscious smile,
She ponder'd dreamily,—then thought aloud,—
' Myself I gave thee,—how to yield thee more ?
Why thou, my babe,—a ransom for a kingdom !
What were I now, no more of mine to give ?
But there art thou, Caesarion,—*our* Son !—
Soon comest thou, my Caius ?'

Soon he came,—
In form triumphant, as a conqueror,—
Of Egypt Master, Roma's high Dictator.
Withheld the Alexandrines nought their homage ;
Defence no more, no more the work of war !
Abase the spear,—forsake the battlements ;
In suppliant livery, go forth to hail
The Consul ; ' Priests, submission testify ;

Bring out your idols,—leading, carry them,
That he who hath prevail'd may cease to slay.'

Caesar, just, merciful, before them bent,
Bestowing kindness, so he took their love.
Through the late hostile city passing slow,
With added escort of admiring crowds,
He gains the Roman quarter, there to find
An earnest welcome from his soldier friends.

Then to the Palace,—the expectant Queen !
She last, as in progressive happiness,—
Climacteric of his joy ! Not oft in life
To men such moments hap, or, rarer still,
Are in fruition well enough esteem'd ;
For, at the crowning hour, we underrate
The rare felicity at length achieved ;
Occasion scantily use, or let it slip—
Then, in the after-time, regret in vain !

Eager, resplendent, near the door she rests,
His coming list'ning. Buzz of welcome ceased,
Caesar, dismissing friends, her chamber seeks.

'Salute thee,—Victor ! as but *one* may greet,—
As Cleopatra may,—from ruddy lips
Requital full of gratitude and love.
I know thy happiness is mine, my King,
I know my happiness is thine, my King,
E'en as my pride is great at thy renown ;
Resign'd to die, and yet but faintly doubting,
Meting thy prowess in the deeds of war,—
Some fears, thou know'st for other, half thyself,—
The dangers counting of the contest dread,—

I re-exist, as one new-born, to bless !
Seat thee, O Consul, whilst I hear thee speak.'

With tender touch, he placed her, separate,—
Sedate beheld, admiring pensively ;
Her white hand raised, compliant, to his lips;—
' Queen Cleopatra,—now, indeed, the Queen,—
The chance of war is, as thou sayest, dread,
And we the gods must thank for good result ;
Despite all skill, and bravery, and strength,
May be misfortune past the power of man.
We had a stubborn wrestle ; and my heart
Hath sometimes quailed *for thee* ; I had to lose
A life already by mankind inscribed,
The best part spent, the rest of second worth ;
Yet would I conquer where'soe'er I go,
Moreo'er for thee—and thee !'

Hereat she rose,
And, o'er him leaning,—' Guardian Angel mine !
Were not I mean and poor in thankfulness
Possess'd none other answer than my love?—
For that, alas ! I know must pass away :
Thou goest to thy glory, leaving me
The Queen of Egypt,—Queen bereft of thee !
I knew it, sadly, in the lonesome days
Chequer'd by hope and fear, by doubt and trust,—
For me, for thee, and more for next to tell.'
Then moving noiselessly, she near'd a cot,
And, lifting coverlet, breathed out, ' Thy Son !
Here, Caius, thy reward ; we both shall die,
Perchance not far between ! for I am rash,
And of a nature not for long enduring,—
Here, who somewhen shall memorize us both,—

Caesar *and* Cleopatra ! he who won
The world at will,—and she who ruled o'er him !
More great than Caesar possible,—he's here !
Ah, did *thy* mother, Caius, equal his ?
Lo, thy Caesarion ! whom I give as more
Than Cleopatra.'

O'er the cradle bowed,
He, whilst the child regarding,—'Truly, Queen,
A goodly boy he is—a kingly boy,—
Proof of thy matchless wealth in witchery,—
A gift beyond thyself ! Caesarion, hail !
Supernal Augur who thy future limns !'
Then kiss'd the babe, and then the Mother kiss'd,
And gently her re-seated, and resumed,—
'O radiant Mother ! after war's turmoil,
Dolour and danger, and the sight of death,
A while of comfort and repose were well,—
The compensation of our anxious hours,—
With thee, with thee at best, ah, most with thee.'
At this the Queen shot forth enchanting rays
From grand, black, luminous eyes—whereat he paused,
To meet the meant caress,—and, after, said,
'Why, yes, dear, most with thee ! what mortal man,
Since Saturn's reign, was otherwhile so bless'd,
As I in thy benign companionship,
And love ? for, e'er so long, we meet to love.
Together go we, ay, together go,
Thinking no cease of our consented Heaven ;
See thy Egyptus at the banks of Nile,
The same I read of in Herodotus' page,—
Antient to him, as antient now to us,
Antient ere Roma or Athenæ rose,
Ere great Achilles strove, or Homer sung ;—

Seen later by thy greatest Ancestor,—
Pupil of Aristotle,—Philip's Son ;
That wondrous Alexander, demigod,—
Whom would I equal ! in desert of fame ;—
Dear one, thou art his kin, and thee I love !—
Am I not, loving thee, with him akin ?
Together go we to those hallow'd scenes,—
Hallow'd by Time, who hallows that he spares,—
Together go we,—body and spirit one !
But first,' and then his gravity return'd,—
' Have we to seat thee firmly on thy throne.'

' Dear King ! (thou art my king,—until thou goest—
Shut out that thought ! my king, as now, for aye !)
Thou hast by virtue earn'd some restful span,
With her from Hades rescued by thy love ;—
Forgetting circumstance, excluding all
The wretched premonition of the next,—
Forbidding pain, and caring not for care ;
O'erlooking not that Earth as Heaven can be
Whilst we ignore the after and the past.
What were Elysium but a livelong day ?
The present value, and the present seize,
For such surcease serene will scarce return :
What is thy glory,—thy Dictatorship,—
Compared with life by Cleopatra's side ?'

' Queen, thou art subtle with thy tuneful voice,
That tells me more than man may care to own.
Ah, fair enchantress ! my ambition fades,
Whilst thee I touch, and look into thine eyes ;
My Lotus thou ! I on thy graces feed,
Unmindful of the worship of the world !
Consanguine with the Great of Macedon,

Thou hast a hero-heart ; and I would reign,
Sweetheart ! within that heart,—than chief of kingdoms.

Be it as thou wilt ; to Nilus speed we ;
Be it, then, joyance, pastime—Sybarite !
Though not unblent with purpose ; we shall seek
What Caesar ought to know ; he thanks the gods,
Who bring this happy lot, to know with thee.'

‘ Caius, thy words are strains from Helicon !
I, once thy prisoner, hold thee now as mine ;
(My prisoner always, if I have my will !)
Next shalt thou see what is thy neophyte
When she doth play the Queen ; the triumph past,
By thy wise influence, the State secure,
A Royal Progress have we on our Nile.’

As now, so then, success is deem'd the right ;
The cause is spent, and men forget the cause.
War is an evil, and the war is o'er.
Come peace ! as rain to the exhausted earth,
Or as the south wind to the ailing frame.
The Alexandrines, in heart-ease and joy
For Cleopatra clamour'd ; she, appearing
In beauty well bedight, won popular love,—
Their Sovereign and their pride ! Nor Caesar less
Obtains their homage : he, with sage attent,
Good counsel gives, to satisfy their will,
And there is rest.

A banquet by the Queen.
The Consul, at her side, the Chief of Men,
Forgets the conqueror, as honour'd guest ;
The singers and the minstrels have one burthen,—

Praise to their youthful Mistress, and acclaim
To Rome's Dictator.

And, next day, a Pageant !
Went first the Priests of Thoth and of Osiris,
Each with his sacred idol, treading true
To sound of lyre and timbrel, well attuned.
In gorgeous Chariot, (whereunto were yoked
Six Elephants, milk-white, in silver trappings,)
Sat Cleopatra, and, with solemn mien,
The noble Roman whom they late had scorn'd.
Attending, soldiery, of horse and foot,
The prime of Egypt's army ; following,
A Car by Leopards drawn, supporting high
The youngest Ptolemaeus,—yet a child,—
(Princess Arsinoë a prisoner now ;—)
Next, Nobles, Officers of State, Mace-bearers
With the regalia of the Ptolemies,—
Aediles and Præfects, and the Palace helots,
Carrying the banners of their new-made Queen.
Then the prætorian cohort, veteran men,
Stalwart and grave, methodic in their motion,—
As 'twere to tell that, first and last, was Rome.
Along the teeming streets are groups, all eyes,—
The smiling eyes of welcome ! house-tops fill'd
With zealous women in their holiday gear,
Gay garlands throwing, as their votive gifts,
In Cleopatra's lap,—or half for Caesar ;
Sidelong the happy people dance and sing,
Whilst skipping maidens strew the way with flowers ;
First, to Serapis' Temple, there to give
Due homage and thanksgiving to the gods.
Next, Temple of Hephæstion ; built to him,
The friend of Alexander, lost too soon ;—

At Alexander's will, a demigod.
On, o'er the Heptastadium, to Pharos,
Passing the Harbour, where the doubled Navies
Tell, with a deafening shout, the Sailors' glee.
In festive trim, the Ships alike rejoice,—
Their sails and pennants, conscious of their Queen,
Swelling or flaunting in the sycophant air.

Back to the Palace,—a delirious throng,—
Whereat, descending, forthwith Caesar call'd
A Synod of the Nation, summoning,
With gracious frankness, to him—all who would.

'Ye men of Egypt, here accept your Queen ;
And thank the gods who grant you Cleopatra !
My part it is,—for *that* the gods be praised !—
To render to you such a Queen as none,—
No kingdom, can example ; Egypt, favour'd
Above all nations in this world's delights,
Has now a Sovereign like with Egypt's Sun !
Prize her well, men of Egypt,—prize her well !'
With wildest cries, hilarious, rang the walls
Of that vast regal chamber ; Cleopatra,
In beauty beaming, and seductive grace,
Instant held Court ; the recusant nobles came
With loyal promptitude, to kiss her hand,—
To sweetly seal their fealty.

So, as Queen,
In that blest stillness of the darkling hours,
And sweet suspense of care—spake Cleopatra—
'Now bankrupt am I, to the last ! my king,—
In gift or praise alike ; yet whilst we live
Together, all is well ; the day's the day,

Withouten a to-morrow. I will show
Much to thy wonder—more than *I* have seen.
Joy ! to be seen with thee. Consider thou,
My Caius, what it is. On Nilus' breast
Like swans afloat, and better, less their toil !
Lodged in a Palace, which my Galley is,
We shall have halcyon days, and halcyon nights.—
Nay, look not thou so grave ! not void of aim,
Pursuit of knowledge, and for wisdom more,
To thee, at least, will fleet the sunny hours,—
Will fleet ! alas—alas—but I have said,—
We will not think to-morrow.'

As she ceased,
From musing, Caesar gently takes her hand,—

'Most loved, and lovely ! in this mundane life,
We mix to-day, to-morrow, and the gone,
Not knowing where they tend ; 'tis very good
To make the most of that the gods bestow,
With our scant vision straining not too much.
We have the present, the relentless done
Is with the Powers above ;—whate'er our acts,
For aye we make a past, and it is well
The joy we now intend some substance hath.
Thebae and Memphis ! Thou and I should see
Their broken grandeur,—justly to compare
Ourselves with greater ;—for I tell thee, dear,
There is no gain in pluming ignorance,
Which lets us measure higher than we are.
This but the search of Truth, (for Truth is not,)
To follow, fearless, where perception guides,
Minding not though it dwarfs us, and impugns
Our fondest faith in seeming verities.

Yea, on the banks of thine old Nilus' stream,
Whose fountains none can tell, well'd up the springs
Of learning, science, and ingenious art,
(The gnomon, and the monthly march of Time,)
Philosophy, of earth, air, sea or sky,
Or, most, the fate of Man's unprisoned soul.'

'Too wise art thou, O Caius,—wiser I,
More wise, discerning less ! for me to see
The objects near, which I can grasp, enjoy,
Take pleasure from, by eye, ear, every sense !
Whilst thou, too keenly noting, too far seekest,
O'erlooking things that bring delight in life.
Trust then thyself to *my* Philosophy,—
And thou shalt kneel, to kiss the Earth we tread.'

'Fair sophist ! let *thy* wisdom have full sway.
In thy fresh flush of perfect womanhood,—
Of vernal bloom ! thou see'st with hopeful eyes—
A healthful vision, not yet inwards turn'd,—
The dreary introspect of withered loves ;—
Lucific orbs ! whose potent influence
Is as Nepenthe to my inmost soul,
To banish all but blissful memories !'

'Thou lov'st me ! Caius, go we to our rest,—
To-morrow prove I my Philosophy !'

This was the night when Caesar met the shade
Of fallen Pompeius,—by his thoughts upraised ;—
His bed on lain, in moments somnolent,
He mutter'd sadly, cabalistic words.
'And where art thou, Pompeius, dearest friend,

Now when, the danger o'er, I count on joy?
If we did hate, our hate had spring in love,—
We scorn to quarrel with the thing we scorn.
Why didst thou spurn me? thee I did not spurn,—
But loved thee only less than one,—myself.
Why would'st thou wish thee greater than thy Friend?'
Then, clear to vision, (in his mental eye,)
Saw he the figure of the famous Chief,—
His curly locks, and cheerful lineaments,
His model form, that made him pride of man ;—
' Dear brother, *salve!* forth, for ever, friends,
If thou would'st speak to me, 'tis not to chide,
Thou dost forgive me errors unexplain'd,
Thou knowest that I love thee,—ever loved ;
When, in blest Leuce's Isle, our Manes meet,
Forgotten quite all other than our loves !'
The Apparition smiled,—and Caesar woke.

END OF PART THE FIRST.





Caesar in Egypt.

PART THE SECOND.

THE phases of our life, as chapters, end.
Ourself we find pertaining to a world
Whereof, at first, we think it varies none ;
Then cometh change,—as in Kaleidoscope,
And our next chapter is a world fresh found.
Again it changes, and again we live,
As join'd and native to some strange new things ;
Until, of Earth the changes being rung,
Evolves the latest chapter of this world,
Putative Proem to—a world beyond.

The charm'd hour hail ! when travel shall begin,—
Be over labour, care the while debarred.
A time of gladness is it, unconfined,—
Until the day, when caring must return.
But what shall liken to that signal morn,
Of beatific peace—enjoyment whole,
When Caesar, linked with Cleopatra, sped
To view the unspent glories of the Nile ?
Vicegerent most esteemed of Roma's power,
Sovereign most brilliant of Egyptus' realm.

All life, more life in Alexandria now !
Told is it not their Queen her voyage takes,
Her guest, the victor? Streets to Nilus tending,
With banners blazon'd, — lined with curious
crowds
To see great Caesar pass. Within, without,
Laborious bustle with diversion vies.
A festive holiday,—a Nation's joy !
The Consul's Officers, and Men of State
Of Egypt, join, in genial brotherhood,
To signify approval. All prepared,
Wends the procession, cheer'd by ringing tongues,
Unto Eunostus' bay, Cibotus' Port,
Where float the ships, in proud expectance wait-
ing,
To bear the noble Travellers Nilus through.
A glorious flotilla ! uncompar'd,—
Rigg'd in gay colours, decorate with flowers ;
Not as for sea, to brunt the winds and waves,
But inland bound, design'd for corporal ease,
Perchance that Epicurus were its lord !
A Water-palace Cleopatra's Barge,—
A Palace moving, with its tenants moving ;
Above the deck a canopy o'erspread,
Of gaudy colours woven, flashing bright,—
Pavilion, cool, luxurious, for the Queen
And Consul ; chambers underneath, hung
round
With draperies of various hues well blent ;
For feast, for sleep, for bath, commodious.
The prow Hawk-beak'd, as type of Horus, god,
Guardian of crown'd temples ; at the helm,
Upraised, an Elephant's head, in beaten gold,—
The Ptolemaic symbol.

First away

A pilot barque, with music-men and maidens,—
Melodious harbingers of happiness !
Singing they go, to notes of pipe and lyre,
Sweet p rfumes casting to the Zephyrs near,
Scattering Earth's blossoms on the face of Nile.
Follows the Royal Barge, and next, as due,
A loyal company of servitors,
With aliment of meat, and fruit, and wine ;
Succeeded by a minor ship of war,
Mann'd by the body-guards—a jovial crew.

Now Hapimou, beneficent god of Nile,
Prosper,  erially, the regal Fleet,
Enough to swell the sails, and but enough ;
Sun-god Osiris gives his sanction full
By radiance unshaded. Winding on
Through Mareotis' lake, and noting there
The water-flowers, and birds of various hue,
The sacred Ibis, Heron, King-fisher,
And, most to instant humour, vineyards near,
The source profuse of Mareotic Wine :
And then the festal hour, and then the night,
Which comes to men, at most, as given for sleep,—
Though some have life for night as life for day,
To do what best is done whilst others drowse,
To see the splendours of the skiey host,
And much that Nature worketh in the dark.
Moreo'er there is for Night to humankind,—
It maketh a to-morrow !

Morrow came

To those Nile-revellers of antiquitie,
At Sais,—noted of the great Amasis,

(And, sooner still, for Bocchoris the Wise,
Lawgiver, founder of prosperity,)
By loss of commerce hasten'd to decay.
Here were for Caesar wonders of the past ;
The Fane of Neith, onetime of Earth the greatest,—
The Fane of Neith, ' the Mother of the gods.'
An area vast, with columns scatter'd o'er,
Of Palm-tree fashion : tombs of god Osiris,
And Hophra ; giant monoliths, set up
Where native stones exceed not grains of sand.
Near these, the sacred Lake, whose glassy face
The lamp-lit mysteries of Isis mirror'd.
Nor far Busiris, with its temple-towers,
That, at the feast of Isis, all excelled.

See now Bubastis of the Hierarch-Kings,—
Shishak renown'd, the noblest of their race,—
Who to King Solomon a daughter gave ;—
Bubastis high, up-raised by felon hands ;
Devote to Pasht, (by Greek, Diana named ;)
Whose Fane, begirt with Groves, rose loftily,—
As telling, truly, it had been supreme.

Next Heliopolis,—City of the Sun,—
A shatter'd sepulchre,—a wreck of Shrines !
Here Caesar, zealous, ' This must we survey ;
The hallow'd spot where Plato and Eudoxus
Conceived new thoughts,—where Moses, legislator,
Derived his wisdom, to instruct mankind,—
Moses, prime leader of a tribe heroic,
Who told of Heaven and Earth, in god-like words.—
This City, first-named On, whence Joseph took,
For Wife, the high-priest's daughter, Asenath ;
Whence, later, Baruch, Jeremiah sang.

This seat of learning where sage Manëtho wrote ;
Which foster'd Solon, and Pythagoras ;
Where somewhere dwelt sublime Euripides.'
So, saw he vestiges of those grand Temples
Built to the Sun-god Re ; and Obelisks,
Ancient when seen by Moses and by Plato,—
Transported now to European shores.

Then, after labour or of limb or eye,
For Caesar, as the Barge on smoothly glides,
Luxurious rest, in loved companionship,
Mid sights and sounds of pastime and plaisance.
And soon, afar outlined, by distance dim,—
As ghosts of objects next to be beheld,—
The simple forms of those stupendous Deeds,
Told of, described, unseen but half-believed,—
Pi-Rama—Pyramid,—the Mountain-tomb :
Great soul of Caesar ! its delight we share,
At thought of such a soul's desire fulfill'd,
When we behold them, consecrated more,
By revolution of two thousand Suns !

Onward to Memphis ! old, to be so old
As to be old when older Thebae fell.
To Memphis onward, and to Moëris lake ;—
The mystic city, Crocodilopolis,—
To Sebek sacred, that grim Crocodile-god.
Memphis—a wide expanse of measured miles,
Ornate with solemn Fanes, colossal Forms ;
Temples of Pthah, and of the Bull-god Apis ;—
Where Apis, in the holy stable, lived ;—
On hill Sinopium, temple of Osiris ;
Of Isis, nearer, by Amasis raised ;

The Pyramid of Suphis, Cheops named,
Guarded by Sphinx of huge proportion,—
With features fair, of quietude divine,
Demonstrative of a resolvéd will,
That changes not,—that was, and is—for ever ;—
Symbol of Human mind, with Lion force,
In stone made manifest—inspiring worship ;
And countless tombs, gigantic, o'er the plain,
Each rivalling each in largeness, by the Lake,
On whose green Isle a lordly Palace rose ;
The wond'rous Labyrinth, wond'rous more and
more,
Of archéd, cavernous chambers richly dight,
A maze of devious passages and halls,
Delved for mysterious rites,—extending far,
To Moëris Island reaching,—therewithin
Sad tributes, numberless, outliv'd their aim ;
Gone—gone, alas ! to that blank nothingness,
Concluding human toil.

At eve to say—
' Here, Cleopatra, find I travail sweet,—
Less blest, for more is not, than thy blest presence ;—
Thou hast a land of wonders, that surpass
Foreknowledge heard or seen ; those fore-born men
Of thine Egyptus, surely giants were,
Had stature of Colossus,—equal souls ;
They acted as we dream,—built up their thought,
And in their God-ward search, aspired to Heaven.
Their stepping-stones, if rough, yet mounted high
Towards the blue Empyrean, and their yearning
Betrayed a virtuous instinct of the mind.
Queen, I am loftier man for these beholdings,
And thank thee for a priceless, deathless boon—

In sight of things that amplify my soul.
Now, after labour, rest ! enough of thought :—
Now,—whiles the After-glow sheds quiet spell,
Gladness, with music, and the time-struck dance !
To-morrow more of old Egyptus' marvels.'

Then Cleopatra, in low tone,—affection'd,—
'Dear Caius, thy rejoicing is as mine !
And yet, remains unequal with my love,
Wherewith I fain would pay thee, if alone ;
Come forth, come forth !'—and came the sounds of
mirth,
Frolic and jollity. The stars shone out
Primordial lustre, from that sky serene :
Moon-goddess Ashtaroth, with clearest ray,
Smiled on the revelling ripples, when the Barge,—
Most sumptuous burthen borne on Nilus' breast,—
Its pennant lower'd for the balmy night.

Fresh to the glories of the opening day,
E'en as the Orient Globe made gold the hills,
Alert is Caesar ; whilst the Galley speeds,
Surveys the river-banks, with thoughtful air,
Until, Abydos gain'd, he signal'd 'Stay ;—
This is Abydos, of the Tablet-famed ;'—
And, to declare intent, rejoin'd the Queen.

'Here must we pause ; 'tis here, the home of Menes,
Egyptus' primal king,—first naméd This—
Of Menes "the Eternal,"—sacred ground,
Whereon I needs must stand ; the conscious soil
Hath whispers here of centuries bygone,

Anear the birth of Man ; it seemeth shame,
Howbeit the tree of knowledge yieldeth fruits,
The soul no greater grows !—what more am I
Than Menes ? yea—one Caesar, and one Menes !
For every soul is as the gushing rill
Outchannelling its course towards the Main,—
Again to find the source that gave it birth,
For dissolution in infinitude.
Each man fulfils his own, inceptive, part ;
He mimics other ?—still to be himself !
That is not virtue, dear, professed by rote,
Caught from the rostrum or the portico,
Or from stale maxims vaunted on the walls,—
“ See, it is written, *that* is what I hold ! ”
There is no virtue in a hackney’d phrase,
Conventional, or imitative forms
Derived at second hand, and glorified
In practices of superstitious rites ;
It is not virtue to keep safe oneself—
Boasting as “ good ” what self alone affects,
No pain endured for other than oneself,
Good let alone, lest it should harm oneself,—
As virtue claiming, merely *not* to do
Some things, which, being done, were hurt to none,
Which, left undone, saved not a pang or tear ;
Or, with sly semblance, meekly to refrain
From things whereto our temper does not tend,
From things wherein to act exceeds our wit—
From things desired withal, beyond our power,—
Perchance whereto our boldness doth not mount !
But, dear, the virtue is,—if virtue be
In good that, acted, is but negative *right*,—
Moved by spontaneous impulse of the mind,
To do what men call “ good,” forgetting self,

For other's weal—regardless of reward ;
Not, by design, to gain by other's loss
In diminution or of fame or purse ;
To stay from punishing, (lest justice needs,)
Or causing mental pain, to slake revenge ;
To wish no harm to other,—to forgive ;
To be sincere—whene'er we safely can,—
And, crowning all, the closing of my tale,
Ne'er to neglect the calls of gratitude—
To fellow-mortal, or the beneficent gods !
Virtue—in justice, courage, nobleness—
Includes the godlike attributes of Man.'

The Sun is up,—no day without its mark !
A light repast, in Cleopatra's smile ;
Fruits, and the fish of Nile, confections rare
Of Earth's most perfect produce ; delicate meats,
And wines of Mareotis and Thebaid,
Of Tenia and of Coptos. Next to see
Majestic ruins, and eternal tombs
Mementos of the Past ; the Temple-palace
Raised by Oimenepthah ; and what remain'd
Of Menes.

Envy, rightly, is dispraised ;
Yet may we envy that blithe pilgrimage,
With Queen and Consul, through those shining shores,
Man's crumbled greatness noting as we pass.
The famous Fane of Antæopolis,
Shrouded in Palm-tree grove ; the gorgeous
Tentŷra,—Temple vast as rich, adorn'd
With art, in form or colour, where was found,
In later age, that curious planisphere
Celestial, of Zodiac symbol-pictured.

Coptos, first stronghold of the Troglodytes,
Strange Cavern-tribe untamed,—and on to Thebae,—
Grand Thebae ! grandest relic of Old Time.

‘Queen, I have marvell’d much, and much derived,
Am still unsatiate,—eager still to see.
Here shall I witness monuments described
By that shrewd traveller of ages gone,
Father of History, Herodotus,—
With Homer and Demosthenes well classed.’

‘Yea, Consul, and we here awhile will rest,
Our loved, much-loving subjects gathering round,
To hold high festival, in regal state ;—
Revels, and courtesies ordain’d to serve
Thine honour and disport. For Thebae, glad
At the event of thine august approach,
Gives thee warm welcome to her classic shores.’

‘Be praised the Queen !—for her ingenious care,
To make our working holiday complete.
But first, to see the wonders ; for ’tis well
To satisfy the conscience ere we play.
When work is done, the after-rest is sweet ;
The heart is light, the duteous mind content.’

So, with a troop of comrades, chosen friends,
Led by an aged Hierophant, well-versed
In mystic records of Egyptus’ land,
And Hierogrammat of linguistic skill,—
The Consul hied, in sober merriment,
To view the skeletons of ages fled,—
The giant bones, denoting giant minds ;
Those unexampled Temples sempitern—

Luxor and Karnak, twain, yet joined in one
By avenue of Sphinxes, multiplied,
To endless view ;—and first to Luxor, built
By Amunothph ; passing through the propylon huge,
Prefaced by two tall obelisks, and two
Gigantic figures human-form ; beyond,
The temple-tomb of Ozymandias,
And unrecorded cenotaphs self-told.
But when, through lines of Sphinx and Obelisk,
To Karnak Caesar came, amazed, he said,—
‘Too wonderful this vision to be real,—
The work of necromancy, or a dream !
This grand confusion, these colossal forms,
This wide extent of ruin ; how could die
Men who had life for this ? they could not die ;
Fate fails to cast them to oblivion ;—
Here, in their deeds, they live ; these silent walls,
These graven monoliths, with meaning rife,
These prostrate statues, and these columns stark,
Speak, from remotest time, to us who live.
Are not these hieroglyphs, through time improved,
The origin of language writ by me ?
Yea, bow I lowly to those greater men
Who taught me how to write : what now were I,
Albeit my labours, all my perilous pains,
Less that divine invention of the pen,
Whereby I tell,—and tell as suits the will,
Though truth my beacon be,—my acts and thoughts ?
And yet, alas ! how know I, but my work
Inscribed, destructible, will fade away,
Whilst these strange anaglyphs survive to show
The energies foregone ; what do we now
To live as they, the countless ages through,
Upon the Earth ?’

His reverie at end,
The Hierophant, proceeding warily,
With courteous motion, would direct his eye
To observation of that marvellous scene,—
The relique of King Ramēses,—sometime named
Sesostris,—Palace, Citadel, and Fane ;
That temple added by the Queen Nitocris,—
Queen to Psammetichus, but more than King,—
Comely as brave ;—her two high obelisks,
And more, like grand, in shape significant,
The Hall of Ancestors,—dimensions vast,
Exceeding all that Greek or Roman dared.
The lofty portals, columns numberless,
Ghastly erect, or wildly overthrown,—
Unbounded desolation !—everywhere,
On, on ! too far for sight.

Away, away !
The tongue is dumb-struck by the mind o'erwhelm'd.
Next, search the Libyan shore,—for new surprise.
See the Memnonium,—Ramēses' temple-tomb ;
See in the Court-yard that enormous stone-god,
(Grandeur in size for once exemplified,)
Its hand alone threefold the corporal bulk
Of him who raised it for his effigy.—
(Fit emblem of their greatest conqueror,
The largest hewn in stone.) See galleries,
To all the arts of culture dedicate ;
The sacred Library, on front inscribed
' Dispensary of the Mind.' Then further go,
To view the twin Colossi of the plain,
One, that first-famous Memnon, told about
By ancient men with superstitious awe ;—
(Him Memnon by the great Achilles slain,)

At sunrise giving forth its vocal sounds,
Somewhiles tears shedding, with oracular words;—
Leviathans that centuries outlive,
Still onward gazing, in unending calm.
Passing by groves of Palm, and monuments
Much by Acanthus and Acacia hid,
And oft with thorny Zizyphus o'ergrown,
They find the mansions of the mighty dead,
Mid ravines rocky, and the Mountains bald—
Tombs of the Kings: and here the Hierophant,—
The vaulted chambers threading reverently,—
In erudite phrase, his stirring story told,
Of walls, in colours picturing bright and clear,
The acts and triumphs, else forgotten, lost !
Worker and memoir in one place entomb'd.
Immense sarcophagi, of ebon stone,
Inscribed with symbol characters, within,
Without, around, to tell the tale and praise
Of their once animate tenants, there embalm'd.
But chief, was that, to Britain taken now,¹
Of Alabaster, whole, magnificent,
Shrine of the first Menepthah, mighty king,—
Found by Cambyzes erst, and desecrate ;
Devote to Neith, that goddess most adored,
Neith, of the upper firmament the Queen,
Wherein the ' Book of Mysteries ' is graven,—
The war of Soul with Typhon, cause of Sin.
This, and much other, read the Hierophant
Of history, by no tradition stain'd,
Far—far, and mystic as the source of Nile.
Here, roaming these sepulchral palaces,
These noiseless habitations of the dead,—

¹ The Sarcophagus now in Soane's Museum.

Great Caesar view'd with sympathetic soul,
Affection's token, in embalméd loves,—
Mummies of memories, memory to outlive !
There saw he too, depicted, erst unseen,
The graceful Giraffe with uprearing front,—
His Quæstor whispering, ' Seek we one of these,
To deck our Triumph, when we rule in Rome.'

Toil, for the day, be o'er : to Nilus back,
To rest and think, engendering fresh resolve.
Behold the Royal Barque, with flying flags,—
The jocund music speaking welcome sweet—
Hail to the Consul, whensoever he comes !

Now is it revelry, and heart's delight ;
The feast, the song, the timbrel and the dance,—
Whereo'er the splendid Chief presides, in State :
In Tyrian robe apparelled, regally,
Her temples bound with annular Asp of gold,—
Agatho-dæmon, type of Majesty.
On silver platter, and in golden chalice,
Went round the generous juice, and dainty cates—
(Wine, that doth prompt to merry words and antics,)
Wines of Egyptus or of Thasian grape,
Or, first preferr'd, Anthylla : so the Barque,
A microcosm of joyance, teem'd with life !

But hark ! the ring of laughter from the strand,
As the declining sun, with shimmering ray,
Subdues the motions of the festive scene.
' These, Consul, be my virgins, come to charm thee ;
Doth not the breath of Spring refresh thy soul ?'
Advancing now the maidens, modestly,
In gauzy garments, that but feign disguise,

Bespangled, glittering, and betrick'd with blooms ;
Their brows with wreath of lotus-blossom bound,
Their ankles circumvest with silver bells.
First, reverence to their Queen, to Caesar next,
Then blithely dance, well-timed by castanets,
And cymbals, and the synchronal clap of hands,
Or by the agile tread of foot unworn,
Or supple mesh of interwoven limbs,
Or wavy movement of voluptuous grace.
Last, she, the paragon of symmetry,
Taia named, from forth the group, alone,
With arch significance to Caesar, sang.

(INVOCATION.)

*Gods of Egyptus' stream,
Gods whom, of Earth, we dream,
Gods of high Heaven, supreme,—
To Caesar, glory !*

*Osiris ! who doth shine,
Isis ! his Queen benign,
Horus ! her son divine,—
To Caesar, glory !*

*Lights of the glowing sky,
Earth that doth food supply,
Zephyrs that round us fly,—
To Caesar, glory !*

*Men, who the world command,
Men of Egyptus' land,
Or, from remotest strand,—
To Caesar, glory !*

*Camel and Elephant,
Beasts that the desert haunt,
Couch your strong limbs, and vaunt,—
To Caesar, glory !*

*Behemoth, Crocodile,
All Fish that swim in Nile,
Ichneumon, and Reptile,—
To Caesar, glory !*

*Ibis, and Birds that sing,
Eagle with soaring wing,
By tune or plumage bring,—
To Caesar, glory !*

*Butterfly, Scarabæus,
(That doth from evil free us,)
All living things that see us,—
To Caesar, glory !*

*Lotus, our Nile's delight,
And flowers of colours bright,
Odours that balm the night,—
To Caesar, glory !*

*Land of the mighty past,
Of Tombs, and Monoliths vast,
Give glory, first or last,—
Caesar, and Cleopatra !*

Her song out-sung, the radiant maiden bow'd
To Caesar's forehead, as, with native grace,
She, on his brow, a myrtle-chaplet placed ;

He, bending to receive her proffer'd kiss,
Nor any loth, a jewel gave her, saying
'This to remember Caesar.' Taia blush'd.

The feast is over, and the gleeful throng
Have left the night to silence ; but the Queen,
In the Pavilion, with the Consul, lingers.

'Beloved, mine idol ! I beheld once more
Thine Egypt's marvels : after greatness such,
I doubt me great ; we scanty judge the past
By those grand reliques,—surely they were gods !
Men of superior nature, nobler soul.
Yet, in their Tombs, they live ! with sturdy will
Contended they with Fate ! nor quite in vain.
They would not die, would half-immortal be,—
Survive in stone or, in their frame preserved,—
Thought petrified,—themselves their monuments ;
In hybrid type, or artful symbol-sign,
Would fain perpetuate material forms,
To designate the workings of the soul.
First at the fount of thought, they deeply drank,
Took inspiration from that Source of Prime,
Erewhen my Fathers, of a faded time,
Imbided of Hippocrene. They had the first ;
And it misgives me—doubting, part ashamed—
That I, in action, do but simulate
Their great original ; shall I bequeath
To men who follow—if the world endure—
Some semblance of those Titans gone before ?'

'Great Caesar, to thyself art thou unjust,
Though just to others, as the world doth know.

Thine acts are models, as thy thoughts are new ;
Whereas Sesostris, of uncertain date,
Mere dust, is lost in doubt and mystery,
Thy name illumines the inscribéd scroll,
For myriads of mortals unbegot.
E'en so, such, Cleopatra—fearing none !
Cheer thee, my Caius ! we have yet to see,
To urge thy soul to more heroic deeds,
If greatest now, thou wilt yet greater be,
And, like a comet blazing in the sky,
Compel mankind to gaze at thy career.
Pr'ythee let past be past, secure the time—
We have the best who live ! enhance thy life :
Occasion lost may ne'er again be found ;
Waste not the fleeting moments made for bliss !'

First gleam of dawn beheld the regal Barque
Astir with workers to perform intent.
Well known, this day the gay flotilla speeds :
On either shore is movement early seen,
And, on the face of Nilus ; now departs
The Queen from Thebae. With the freshening morn,
Came the Thebæans, flocking, countlessly,
To render loyal plaudits, undesought,
And bless the parting concourse.

Shone the sun ;
Egyptus' deities propitious proved ;
In sacred boat were group'd the Hierophants,
Hieraphori with Standards multiform ;
With music, song, on river and on banks,—
Flowers strewn athwart the waters, and the cry,—
'Life to the Queen and Consul !'

Off! away.

The zest of travel is—to seek the next.
Pass by Hermonthis, and Latopolis,
And onward sail until to stay is sweet ;—
Apollinopolis Magna,—there to see
Edfou's grand Temple by the Ptolemies raised,
Wide-spread, as rich in graven histories,
Of hierogram, and symbol-shape occult,—
To be unriddled in the lapse of time.
There, a huge mass, the stone, much ornate, cage
Wherein Hawk-headed Horus grimly sate.
There, the swart Crocodile, elsewhere adored,
Abhorred, as of god Osiris foe—
Of Typhon emblem, genius of Evil,—
Somewhiles devour'd in horror's deep despite !

Reposing,—when the day's sight-work is done,
The earned repast enjoy'd, that calm hour come,
Evening, of day or life ! for peace and ease,—
The Queen, in lightsome spirit, lightsome spake :

‘List thou, my Caius ! whilst a dream I tell,
A dream for thee and me—not all a dream,
Which to fulfil, my fancy pleases well ;
Know'st thou that, further, on the Nubian land,
There will be found, not far, as we can speed,
Wonder more wondrous than we yet have seen ;
I mean the Cavern Fanes of Ipsambul?
Know'st thou that these were sought, and self-inscribed
By one thy compeer, if in glory lower—
Thine Ancestor in greatness and renown—
(As noted aptly by that faithful scribe,
The Greek, of Greeks most skilled in Egypt-lore,)
Psammetichus? him a King of Kings,

Like thee subduing all than him less great.
Wilt thou not see what he, foregone, has seen ?
Those Cavern Temples of Cyclopean thought,
In painted story, and in carved lines,
Adjudged than of Egyptus more refined ;
Scooped in the banks of Nile where bank is rock ;
Fronted with effigy each whose shoulders' breadth
Equals the measure of ten stalwart men ;—
In honour of Osiris Hierax formed ?
The cave a multiple of sculptured Halls ;
Roof upheld by figured columns, graceful
Though colossal, telling, on the pictured walls,
The Hero's grandeur ; in majestic way,—
By pencilled colours, or by chisel deft,
Exalting the achievements of their King.
Such should'st thou see, dear Caius !'

'Cleopatra !

What less than praise for thy alluring scheme,—
Poem of promised pleasure ! hard to lose ;
Yet, whilst, in dulcet tone, thy voice persuadeth,
And whilst I charmed listen, I *must* think,
And, thinking, think of Rome,—too long forsook !
If to be happy were indeed the lot
Apportioned unto men, most blest am I
With thee now, fairest fair ! yet is there more,—
For we do owe a tribute to the gods,
Which, part as gods, we pay,—it is for us
To render back, for all the gifts they grant,
Some service to the world where-o'er they rule,—
Some benefit to other. Poor is he
Of heart, and brain, and soul, whose force is spent
Regarding only that diminutive thing
"Myself,"—pretending to a separate life ;—

For each is part of one unending scheme,
To graft the next on what has been fulfill'd.
We who now live are debtors ; and indebted
To our forerunners, who on us bestowed,
(Beside dame Nature who doth constant bless !)
Those mighty men, with whom thine Ancestors,
Have taught us lessons, by their noble works,
And left their foot-marks in the clefted rock,
Whereby we mount to higher thought and knowledge.
Gem of Egyptus ! Caesar owes that debt,
And he must quit it—or he were not great.
Dear love ! I am much bless'd to be with thee—
With thee, the favourite of the graces trine,—
With thee, the One, her only parallel !
Look on that arch'd sky, with brilliants set,
Mysterious, infinite,—of them I seek
The star most bright, beneficent, beautiful—
To name it Cleopatra ! dost thou hear ?'

'Yea, Consul ! kindest kind,—and wondrous grave !
Let me caress thee,—so to cheer thy soul.
Now, if thou wilt not this, alas, alas !
Another thought have I, so well conceived,
Thou can'st not, surely, fail to execute.
It is that thou shalt see, whiles sad return,
(As meet divergence, for diversion sweet,)
Oasis Ammon. 'Midst the desert sands,
An Island rises, fresh and flourishing,
Of palms and groves, and water-springs and flowers—
A paradise of verdure ; thou shalt see
Temples with gardens, and a Palace fair—
The famed Ammonium, with its riches stored.
Thou wilt on Camel mount, and I the same,—
"Ship of the desert," sometime aptly styled ;

We shall have retinue for company,
And, after joy that novelty doth yield,
Regain the Barque, and float where we would go.
Dear Caius! this a timely thought I ween
Born to prolong our friendship? say thou wilt!
Hath not Rome waited?—surely more can wait!
Whilst Caesar wends where Alexander went?’

‘Cease—cease beguiling, Queen,—I must to Rome.
I shall not match thy greatest Ancestor¹—
In wandering, though with thee, to Oāsis Major,—
Nor like him to be hail’d as “Amun-Ra!”
Whilst Caesar Caesar is, he’ll Caesar be.’

Onward to Ombi—there to note, as chief,
Its Ptolemaic Fane, in pride columnar,
On mound conspicuous at those level shores;
And then to Ultima Thule of Egyptus,
Where commerce, check’d by rocky, foaming falls,
In much suspends its course. Syéne this,
Of bold, romantic aspect, rearing up
Amid the waters,—shaggy cliffs around;
With greenest groves of palm and lebbek tree;—
Where Nubian girls are seen, unheedfully
Cooling their slender limbs in Nilus’ wave.
Syéne—school of Science most remote—
Of first Observatory,—Temple eke,
Where learned hierophants, star-gazing, dwelt—
Or, at the Solstice, watch’d their sacred Well,
One day illumined by the vertic Sun,—
Its circled marge by classic foot impress’d
Of King, and Priest, and ancient traveller,

¹ Alexander the Great.

Herodotus, Eudoxus, Manëtho sage.
And here the gnomon on that day not marks
At noon, the look'd-for shadow on the plane.
Here too the Quarry from whose womb have sprung—
In tintured granite, carved and polishéd—
Obelisk, and Temple, and colossal form
Spread o'er the face of Egypt's mystic land.
Near, the twin island Elephantiné,—
A sylvan nook—one time the seat of kingdom ;
With temples and green gardens interspersed,
'Islet of flowers'—so named,—and then again,
On, to the rocky isle of Philae, placed
Below the rushing rapids, in a lake
Serene, translucent, of the river's bend,—
A swan upon its bosom ! and environ'd
By granite bluffs fantastic—where is found
Shaded by Palm-groves, that most affluent Temple—
To Isis dedicate, in earliest time,—
Join'd by the later Fane, of triune worship,
To God Osiris, Isis, and their Son.
Then, at the Cataract, Caius Julius stands,
Up-climbs the crags, the tumbling floods among,
Admiring much, in meditation rapt—
'Here Menes, Alexander, and Sesostris stood !'

The search is over !—back to seek the Barque,
And give the eve to rest contemplative.

'Dear One ! thou endest well our holiday,
With these so lovely, much adornéd isles.
Earnest in will against the stream we strove,
And next, unwilling, with the stream, return !
Now Alexandria !—by the speediest course ;
For Rome much needeth Caesar—Caesar Rome.'

‘Thy word, O Consul, if against her wish,
Is law to Cleopatra,—doubt her not.
So swift as sail and sturdy rowers can,
To Alexandria ; there, if last, she hopes
A respite brief !’

‘Aye, love,—a respite *brief*!’

The Alexandrines our flotilla met,
With shouts hilarious,—to salute their Queen ;
Hail ! to the Consul, who has brought us peace.
Here, Messengers are found with weighty errand,
From Asia, from Hispania, from Rome.
Whilst, in Egyptus’ sunshine, Caesar dallies,
Fell Faction festers in the wide-spread legions,
Dark-gathering clouds, uprisen, presaging storm.

But first to gladden,—as with those we join
A term of absence over ; politic,
That Caesar’s officers should genial be
With the Egyptian Court,—and Men of State ;
And there are divers farewells of the world,
That claim some tender, ceremonious care.

The Banquet gaily spent, the guests away,
The Palace silent,—‘Queen, we soon must part !’
‘No, Caius, no ! all Nature inculcates
Development by grade, and like decay.
If now our love hath high meridian gain’d,
Let there be calm declension, as the Sun,—
Until, insensibly, by lessening light,
Our night of sorrow comes unconsciously.
When the beneficent gods their boons bestow,

How should we break, with sacrilegious will,
The spell they did create?—in just esteem,
Do we not rightly make the most and best
Of god-sent gifts,—to body or to soul?
Shall our reproach be spiritual suicide?
Are we not well together, great, dear Caesar,
Who, being so mighty, should be lord of joy!
Oh folly, that the happy separate!
Whole life, thou know'st, is but a longer day,
And suffers, last, inevitable doom.
Wherefore permit our ceasing to be slow!
Let there be no to-morrow till thou goest!
We'll make the days most long by wakeful wiles,
Though happier be the faster!'

‘Cleopatra!

Thy voice hath syren tones,—ah, syren eyes!
How strong his will who subjugates thy will:
The lot of man it is, to die in life,
Let slip his longings, as the hours do fleet,—
Defenceless, losing, aught he most doth prize.
Each day we die to somewhat we have loved—
Or, die it will to us, despite our care.
One day we die to all,—a final death,—
The consummation of those deaths whilom:
Soon must I die to thee!'

‘Alas, alas!

May I love Caius, yet his reasons hate?
A woman I—not cold philosopher.
To part from thee is as a Ship doth loose
Its anchor—to the Sea, perchance to wreck.
Hast thou not saved my State, and counsell'd me,
And given me Queenship? Father to me best—
And more—that furthermore! to make thee dearer?'

‘ Queen of Egyptus, thy mellifluous speech
Finds echo in my soul. When we induce
A Heaven on Earth—we know it must have end,—
Indefinite howe’er the tenure be ;
Nor would we have the gods perpetuate,
What our own sense reproves,—which were to take,
Presumptuous, a throne above the gods ;—
(For e’en the gods may not o’erreach the right.)
Oh Lady-love ! illustrious as thou art
In boastful Ancestry’s fallacious fame,
It is as woman, chief, thou provest power ;
Why tell thee this ? except that thou may’st know
I have my share of sorrow, losing thee !
For it doth add a thorn to Caesar’s pain
To think some other in thy heart shall dwell,—
To think some other in thine arms shall rest !
O goddess-born ! thou, of this earth unmatch’d,
Gain’st not sincerely, o’er the heart of man,
Predominance by highest place and name,
But by thy wise and charm’d companionship,
The art to please, with sensuous dowers allied,—
(On Nature’s pet impartially bestow’d.)
Yet pays he homage to thy Queenly grace !
Yet from thee separates, in face of death,
And war’s vicissitudes, to keep his rank
As man, to rule mankind. Though love is sweet,
Ambition must o’errule ! for lest, the world
Were lost eftsoons in chaos of decay.
So, dearest,—doth his grief with thine compare ?
For, though I go, to me *thou* diest not,—
To me *thou* livest ever, whilst I live !
In the still hour, when graver thought is o’er,
The vision of thy presence will return ;
As a melodious song, sometime well sung

Hath taken lodgment in the mystic cave,—
Guarded, thou know'st, by blest Mnemosyne,—
Resounding in ecstatic cadences
Of tones symphonious to the mental ear.'

'Speak on—speak on, O Caius! for thy voice
Comes to my senses as the breath of heaven,
Chanting its ghostly paeon through the grove,—
Charming, the while we scarce know what it tells.
Oh, thou excellest—by thy wit, too much
For her, but woman, nathless all thy praise;
To-morrow, if to-morrow! we shall part,
And thou wilt witness Cleopatra's tears.
It is the hour of sleep,—so long, at least,
Be we for all in all,—and all forget!'

On that long fled to-morrow, was there haste,
And sound of action round the Palace walls,—
Not of rejoicing, but, of fixed resolve,—
Of dull vivacity,—a sense of change.
'The Romans leave us! are we glad or sad?'
Say, it was then as now, and as for aye,—
They are not merry who do wear the mask.
Caesar, on patriot purpose sternly bent,
Press'd on the exodus of Roma's legions,—
Of ships, and men, and horse.

Queen Cleopatra,
With placid visage, but tumultuous heart,
Reclining rests,—Caesarion beside,—
A face of Sphinx, that knows but not reveals!
Her hair unbraided, and her bosom bared,—

The floor bestrewn with lily and with rose,—
Resign'd to meet the Consul's last approach.

Caesar, with manly, slow, respectful step,
To near the couch advanced, and, on his knee,
In silence took her hand,—as when they met.

‘As first you saw me, Caius, so I lie,—
To ask, in tristful trust, of *thee*, my fate.
See thy Caesarion ! and our tale is told,—
Of love, and amity unvarying ;—
More, of thy plenteous kindness, kingly aid.
Oh, must thou go—go now ? I dread thy speech.’

‘Queen, I have something done, and something
leave ;
For all, whate’er, am I rewarded greatly,
In sweet remembrances of thine Egyptus,
Forgetting not that Sweetest-sweet, Thyself !’

‘Ah, Caius, thou hast struck the jarring chord
Dire deprivation, and a life in death.’

‘O friend belovéd ! let us act with honour,
In such just pride approving what we are.
Some part I’ve told thee of unsettled wars,
And Roma’s discord,—to be quell’d by me.
Caesarion will be nurtured in thy care,—
I crave the child, to fondle—look upon :—
From distance shall I counsel, and defend ;—
Soon wilt thou find a King to guard thee well,
And share with thee dominion.’

Stooping then

To kiss her lips,—she, quicken'd by this token,
Sprang from the couch, dishevell'd, passionate,—
Embraced, and, wordless, fell. Caesarion slept :—
Still ! as primeval stillness :—

Caesar stood,
Rigid, with sadden'd eye ; then moved away,
Intoning low—‘ Good-bye, dear Cleopatra !
Twice,—thrice good-bye,—the world’s work must be
done.’
In-breathing, sighing, he the curtains closed,—
While she, among her roses, prostrate lay.

THE END.



COSTANZA.



Costanza.

WHERE Æolus, King of Storms, had earlier reign'd,
That shining Island of the Tyrrhene Sea,
Of rocky aspect, in whose caverns deep
He stored the winds, and bade the tempests stay ;—
Island, where, aye, the faint volcano-glare
Sheds, nightly seen, from sources confluent—
[In dread arcana of the earth, profound,]
With Ætna's seething pit—abode of fire !
Where Mulciber with Cyclops hammering toil'd,
Circled in ardent and sulphureous flames,
At anvils, for the thunderbolts of Jove !
'Tis Lipara ;—there dwelt a daintie maid,
Costanza named ; of noble ancestry,
Much cared for—nurtured in unclouded joy ;—
For since the gods were gone, and Lipara's fires
Blazed upwards but to lighten, not to scathe,
The Isle grew plenteous for the wants of men.
That time was when the turban'd Saracen
Held with the Christian a divided sway ;—
A simpler age, of thought more fresh and free,
When hearts were hearts, and love was love un-
doubting,
And when emotion had its pristine play.

The maid show'd beauty passing common praise—
As though an angel had her mother met !
Mild-melting, oval, silken-fringéd eyes,
Whose placid sheen, as of a glassy lake,
Betoken'd depths profound, and purity,—
Whate'er the mood, true beacons of her soul ;—
Slender yet strong, and agile as the roe,
And rounded as the Phidian master-piece ;
Luxuriant tresses, mantling o'er a brow
Whereon it seem'd the sun, unsetting, shined,—
The pride of Lipara,—but none her own,
Costanza reach'd the age contemplative,—
Not all the present,—when a future dawns,
A land of promise, and illusions sweet !
Ere then a child, of merriest children one,
She had been joyant, and brimful of love ;
She loved her kin, and all of human kind,
Her doll, gazelle, and petted dogs and doves,
She kiss'd the flowerets, with endearing words,
And took delight in butterfly or bee ;
She loved the moon, the stars, sea, earth, or sky,—
The humpéd camel, or the graceful horse,
The pretty babe, or squalid beggar bare,
And, of the wrinkled toad, but saw its eye.
She had been happy, as the roses are !
The dew-drop drinking, paying back perfume ;—
But, next, there grew a void within her heart ;
The loves she loved were not enough to love,—
Nor yet enough for her, to be beloved.
Her mother loved her fondly,—not enough !
She wanted love—in love responsive, whole.

At Lipara they held high festival,
To vaunt the birthday of the Æolian King,

Whereat went forth the island chivalry,
In holiday trim, and warlike pageantry,
For games athletic, and the frolic joust.
Costanza, with her kindred, forward placed,
In simple-hearted, girlish joyfulness,
Bred by the changeful motions of the hour,—
Forgot the hungering void, and look'd, and laugh'd,
As one uncaring, save to be amused.
Then, in the final joust, the victor proven
Had, for his praise, the circus round to ride,
And yield the guerdon to the fairest fair ;
Martucci Gomito,—reining a milk-white barb
Of purest Arab blood, and proudest pace.
Gentle Costanza marked his brave, fierce eye,
Broad forehead, clustering hair, and manly form,
And, in that moment, knew—the void was filled !
As in enchantment, eyed she his approach,
Bowing obeisance, as he moved along,
The myrtle wreath in hand, prepared to throw ;
And still, spell-bound, she gazed, unknowing why,
Curious to note his preference—when, near,
His steed, by fright, or by his heel compell'd,
Rear'd and curvetted,—to the fear of most,—
Whilst she, unscared, observing, saw him bend
Low, to the girths,—the chaplet on her lap !
Up to his eyes she look'd,—Martucci look'd,—
To see the tinctures of her heart suffuse
Her delicate cheek—the primogenial blush !
Sprung from its sources for Martucci's sake,
The efflorescence of her maidenhood !
And then her craving soul was satisfied.

Erelong, as lover, brave Martucci sought
The maid's paternal home, and, ardently,

Declared his palm the victor's dame elect,
To whom he gave the guerdon,—fairest fair !
They said, ' He was not noble, was not mate,
Nor fit companion to their royal race,
Nor wealth enough had he to wed with her.'
Costanza pleaded, ' My first love is he,
My only love, for him I live or die ;
Oh ! mother, let me love him—for I must.'

Martucci, raging, said, ' I'll noble prove,
The wealth will live to gain, or, failing, die !'
And so he rashly sped, with galliots twain,
To rove the seas, and spoil the Saracen.
Boldly he ventured, and his fame came back :
' Rich prizes from the infidel had won,
And home would bring an argosy of gold.'

The while, by hope upborne, Costanza pined,
But one dream dreaming—waking still to dream,
Neglecting much her pets and playful tasks,
For now her loves in one concentrated.

But bold Martucci too far fortune tried !
And, by a day, too long delay'd return.
The Saracen in double strength went forth,
His convoy intercepted, and o'ercame,
Him straightway bearing to the Afric shore.

These tristful tidings fast to Lipara flew ;—
The maiden heard but this—' Martucci dead !'

Then dead was love to our Costanza sweet !
She moved in light unwitting of the light ;
The stars looked cruel, Cynthia but sad,

The sunshine was but chill, the Earth a blank
Of all affections, creatures, colours all ;
The fabric had its lovely form preserved,
Albeit the ghostly habitants were gone !
She wept not tears, alas ! there were no tears ;
Dry were the outshed fountains ; yet she wept !
Weary, with weariness no rest could cure,
Wild wander'd hither, thither, as in dark,
Her beauteous eyes wide open, day or night.

Meanwhile its wonted way on wags the world ;
The portals open'd, revellers came and went.
One night, Costanza, soul-sick utterly,
Her head concealing in mantilla fold,
The parting guests among,—among them forth !
Out, out she glided, thinking, dolefully,
'I have no home, for me the wide, wide world ;
Night is as day, and day to me as night,
Let Nature do with me as Nature will.'
And on she flitted through the sinuous streets,
Obscure and narrow, steep, and stony-rough,
Until she knew the dawn ; and, as the sun
Uprose, she saw the strand, and out beyond,
The sea,—and, on the strand, a fisher's skiff,
Rigg'd for the labours of the wakening day.

With automatic skill, the boat she loosed,
Unshipp'd the rudder, threw adrift the oars,
And push'd away. The wind blew off the shore,
The sail was set, and quick the bark impell'd,—
Its freight a thinking, dormant chrysalid,
Cast to the hazard of the waters wild.

Costanza knew it all,—not wisely knew,

But as synthetic with her fantasies ;
And, somewhat, reason'd justly,—for she said,
'Am I not desolate,—withouten hope,
So whither in the finite can I go ?
If earth to me is nought, the sea is there,
And, fain, may bear me to Martucci's soul.'
Along the boat recumbent, looking to
The sky, by this time brightening into day,
She had one, single, thought—her loved Martucci;
That first smile, by fancy pictured clearly,
Born to bestow the guerdon ; that hot look
Of scorn, of anger, of frustrated love,
When wrongly deem'd unworthy ; that wide chest
With furious storm convulsed—and all for her !
Heroic features cast in Grecian mould,
Herculean shoulders touch'd by curly locks,
His stature that rear'd upwards, like a god ;
And let the ecstasy o'erwhelm her grief.

Apace the skiff is drifting with the wind.
The moon has mounted, and the stars shine out.
Costanza's gazing, ever gazing eyes,—
Stars unto stars ! beheld them, unsurprised,
Thinking they look'd, and spake, and lighted her.
As soul afflight in æther, unconfined,—
A dream upon the ocean floated she !
In all so perfected, so dear to heaven,
A miracle was granted her to save,—
Two seraphs hovering o'er the fragile ark,
Its puny canvas fanning volantly.

Uncounted hours depart ; the charméd maid,
Unnourish'd, lapsing faint, and comatose,
Fell into trance,—translated instantly !

She, with her loved Martucci lived, in heaven,
He to an angel changed, with sapphire wings ;—
Upon his breast her head, his eyes to hers.
She said, ' My love, I've come to thee someway,
Oh, happy me, to find thee anywhere !'
Then heard the music heard amid the spheres,
And knew its meaning,—speaking to her thus,—

*' Doubt not, Costanza—
Love does not die,
Thy love is reckon'd
In thy faintest sigh.*

*' Doubt not, Costanza—
Thy love is dear
To us, blest angels,
Ever, ever here.*

*' Doubt not, Costanza—
As mortal, blind,
Be thou but constant,
Thou thy love shalt find.*

*' Doubt not, Costanza—
If grieved thy life,
Be thou still constant,
Thou wilt yet be wife.'*

Whiles resonant lingering the supernal strains,
Costanza felt a soft encircling arm
Her from her hapless resting-place remove ;—
The miracle-boat ashore, in little bay,
Nigh Syrtis Minor gulph.

‘What art thou, dear?

Whence cam’st thou, winsome child?’ spake Carapresa,—
Enfolding her, with kisses, mother-like.

This heaven-sent finder was of Christian race,
Of Trápani native, and, by garb, she knew
The damsel from Italia’s shore had sped.

At break of morn she would the fishers meet,
On whom, as slave, she waited. ‘Pretty dear!
Speak, for thy language is, I think, as mine.’

Costanza, looking into space some while,
Moan’d out at last, ‘I know not—leave me here.’

Then Carapresa, grown compassionate,
Bore the submissive maid, with haste, unto
The neighbouring cabin’s shelter, there, outstretch’d,
Upon the scant bed laid her, sitting by,
Caress’d her lovingly, and tearfully,

To see such beauty in such wretchedness;
Gave her some simple food, as nurse would do
To infant,—silent watch’d, and watch’d, until
The curtains droop’d, to grant the weary rest:
A lengthen’d sleep! and long the watcher watch’d
To see those eyes re-open, for she thought,
‘Perchance it endeth in the sleep of death.’

Bright Spirits moved around the couch, and smiled
On wizen’d Carapresa, charmedly,—

For, in her wonderment, she knew they smiled.

As some night-wanderer notes the streak of morn,

So that poor watcher saw the fringed lids

Uplift to light and life; rejoicing much;—

‘My darling pet, I welcome thee anew,

Thou hast been slumbering, I have wish’d thee wake.’

Costanza, as in vision, reft of sight,—

‘Where am I now, and who art thou so kind?’

‘Thou art near Susa, of the Afric land,

Poor Carapresa I.'—Then raising her,
She laved her gently, comb'd her flowing hair,
Chafed her white, velvet hands, and tiny feet ;
Enraptured, clothed her, muttering timorously,
' A princess is she—whence such loveliness ?
An angel is she, fair and beautiful !
Alack, alack ! how guard her from reproach,—
From infidel clutch preserve, or lustful look ?'
Then, prayerful, look'd to heaven for help and light,
Continuing,—' Now know I what to do,—
To good Alathiel hie we,—if she will.'

. Alathiel,—comely Moslem dame high-born,
Wealthy, life-wearied by a broken love.
Retired to Susa, she had there devised
Asylum merciful for maidens meek,
To guide the effluent energies of youth
In ways of virtue, and industrious arts,—
A quiet, calm seclusion, where no man
Must dare to enter.

Carapresa said,
Her reverie mumbling, as the beldams do,—
' Lest she should flee,—I'll keep her as a bird
(The bird this Peri, and my hut the cage).'
And, thus decided, nurturing the maid
With such sparse succours as the poorest have,
Went forth to reckon with her masters rough,—
The door securing—window screening close,—
And came again at eventide, to find
Costanza sitting, tranquil and forlorn,
Her splendent eyes to no-where searching far ;
' Good heart ! my dear, wilt thou not with me go ?'
' No home have I, so will I with thee wend,—

No home have I, my home is anywhere.'
Then, in the stillness of the murky night,
The fishers gone to sea, the land at hush,
Kind Carapresa wrapp'd her, led her out,
And, oft supporting, somewhiles carrying quite,
Help'd by a market-cart that sought the town,—
To Susa¹ brought her,—to Alathiel's haven ;—
Susa, a city opulent and gay,
With frowning fortress crowning craggy steep,—
Across that shore where Titan Atlas lifts,
Transform'd to mountain vast, his mighty back,—
Doom'd to uphold the firmamental sphere.

Now struck the early hour, when sleep with most
Is weak, or over, and when cries and raps
Are heard, but fright not ; so Alathiel heard,
Observing it was nigh to break of day,
Whispering her maidens, 'Fear not, I'll descend.'
Soon, through the lattice-bars, in grey-eyed light,
The Donna well both maid and matron scann'd,
Gave patient ear to Carapresa's plea,
Then, moving bolts and chains, with tremulous hand
The jealous door unclosed, and bade them in.

And when Alathiel mark'd the scaréd eyes
Of lost Costanza, watch'd her witching ways,
Heard her weird words of woe, unblaming aught,
Her beauty noted, and her air of grace,—
The most of the romantic tale self-told,—
She added love to chasten'd charity
Anent the fair sea-waif, and nestled her,
To soothe her, night or day, with comfortings ;

¹ Ancient Adrumetum.

The maidens warning, 'Give her tender speech,
And solace her in all she hath to do.'
For being ask'd, in pity, whence she came,
She only said, 'I know not, I'm Costanza ;
There was a world I lived in, but 'tis gone ;
The people in it were both good and cruel,
And, now 'tis past, I know not where I am.'

Costanza with the maidens sate, their queen,
In virtue sole, of saintly influence,
E'en as its fragrance makes us bless the flower ;—
A charm had rested on her, from the skies,
Surpassing reason, having reason none ;
The favourite of a benignant star,
She, by a glance, could warm the frigid heart
And quicken it to impulse ; she would work
Among the diligent sisters, speaking not,
Yet with the art to kindle sympathy ;
Or, with no hindrance, would she stray apart,
And plaintive ditties warble to the moon.
Their gossip list'ning, she replied by looks,
The inarticulate language of the soul.—
Their love she won, in love with no restraint,
But in some awe of her, as heaven-born.

It happ'd that he, then hight the King of Tunis,—
The good and prudent Mariabdel,—
By a Granadan prince was hardly press'd,—
His title to the throne by arms opposed.
Martucci Gomito, a captive there,
The war foreknew, and, wittily, conceived
A thought that, acted, promised liberty.
He, being held a favour'd prisoner,
As one of gracious manners, noble birth,

Said to his gaoler—'Lead me to your chief.'
Then to the master boldly outspoke he,
'I pray that you do take me to the King ;
Tell that the stratagem I would propose
Shall, by adoption, give him victory.'
The master bore that message, and eftsoons
Into the royal presence render'd him.
'I thank thee for this gift of grace, O King !
Would crave thine ear, to prosper my design.'
'The King,—'Proceed, we have our ears to hear.'
'Thou countest on thine archers,—so thy foe ;
And more, they argue that, their arrows flown,
Yours will they have to follow ;—order then,
With utmost privacy to latest hour,
More fine than theirs, your bowstrings ; and devise
Your arrow-slits the same,—to fit the string ;
Refrain, whilst they, elate, their quivers void,
Then, like a hailstorm pelting, loose your shafts !
Soon will they find your narrow-mouthéd darts
Refuse their bowstrings—whilst your archers shoot,
Doubly supplied, their arrows in return :
A panic in their hearts surprise shall breed,
Then, royal sir, thou hast but to pursue.'
''Tis well,' quoth Mariabdelá,—'see thou to it !
And, at the battle, by my side stand thou.
If victory follow, I will say 'tis thine,
Thou shalt high honour have, and rich reward.'
Martucci to his plan the archery form'd ;—
The battle went as, shrewdly, he forecast,
King Mariabdelá his foe repulsed,
With slaughter terrible—dispersion wide.

Donna Alathiel, owning lands at Tunis,
Was thither summon'd, to protect her rights.

Alathiel loved Costanza,—ponder'd thus :—
'She is a graceful statue, would that I
Could it reanimate—to life and love,
By sights and sounds of stimulant verities ;
Recall her memory to things that were,
By streets and marts, and sprightly circumstance
Occurring in the genial haunts of men.'
'Dear foster-child, I now to Tunis part ;
There speed thou with me, that fair City see.'
'Mother, I care not, care not whither where—
With thee—with thee, for ever, would I rest.'
Together sought they the five-gated town,
Halting betimes at house and hostelrie,
(Whereat the dame, foreknown, warm welcome found,)
And, as they wended, those the maid beheld
With reverence, bless'd her, saying, 'She's divine !'

To Tunis coming, as the conflict ceased,—
For little then was known of distant things,—
Alathiel heard that, presently, would be
A royal pomp of triumph national.
The streets bedizen'd were in rainbow hues,
That the fantastic Saracen fancy charm ;
The people buoyant in their late reprieve
From the invader's grasp, and in their pride
Of victory, jubilant with dance and song.
Costanza look'd, and look'd, but smiléd never ;
Her ever brilliant eyes gazed onward ever,—
Nor one side, nor the other ; what she heard
None knew by hearing,—for she spake no word.
She breathed as others breathe ; and yet the air
Gave not her pulses purposes of life.
The while, instinct with art mechanical,
Her fingers deft the loom would nimbly ply,

Or with entrancing pathos touch the lyre ;
She trod the earth as one of other sphere,
Whose thoughts and language are to men unknown.
Toward the Sun she look'd, no Sun to see,
As, things to mortals' sight were not to her.

Io triumphe! trumpets sound ! the King
With our Martucci the procession leads ;
He had the Liparaean thus proclaim'd,—
'This noble youth hath Mariabdela saved ;
Let him henceforth be honour'd of you all.'
Beside the King rode ministers and peers,
In glittering trappings, blazon'd gorgeously,
Then captives, and the trophies of the spoil.

Alathiel, of patrician rank, sat group'd
With noble ladies of the King and court ;
Costanza by her, as the Moslems, veil'd.
They saw the Triumph moving from afar,
Nearing the stately Palace, deck'd, and bright
With gilded domes, and minarets painted o'er,
To them directed,—for the King had said
There, at the close, he would the victor crown.
Alathiel's tent approach'd, the Triumph stay'd ;
Martucci Gomito, his visor down,
Riding, the prime companion of the King :
Alighting now, the King Martucci took
With him, aside, the victor's wreath upheld,
His visor lifted, next his helmet raised,
Bestow'd the laurel, with loud voice pronouncing,
'Lo ! crown for crown, this crown a king doth yield.'

Through the surrounding host, with startled ear,
Was heard a cry of joy, ineffable !

One word alone, 'Martucci!'—Quick, unveil'd,
Costanza, springing from Alathiel's side,
Leap'd to Martucci's neck, around him clung,—
'He is Martucci!—I have found my love.'
Martucci whisper'd,—'Yea, in me thy love!'
The King advanced, unruffled, and, releasing,
Surrender'd her to dame Alathiel's arms:
'We will to-morrow speak of her to thee.'

Those ever-gazing eyes now gazed to see,—
Like with Martucci's—seeing two in one!
To right or left, above, beneath, around.
Costanza hail'd the sunshine with delight,
Saw banners fluttering in the lively breeze,
Smart soldiers, horses, brilliant pageantry;
Varied, prismatic colours of costumes
The palace by,—and heard the clarion ring;
Heard women's voices (of all music most!)
And, oh! she knew of sights and sounds most dear,—
That waking vision of Martucci since,—
The lineaments of Alathiel. Vocal now,
She had outsaid, in those first blissful hours,
All Carapresa wot not of,—and next,
'Dear mother, more than mother! I awoke
To see thy face, to see thee with my mind,
To know what thou hast done, by grace of God,
For her, a luckless, strange, demented thing—
My debt too heavy for this world to pay!'
Alathiel clasp'd her, kiss'd away her tears,—
'True—true, sweet child,—it *was* by grace of God.'

Henceforth the loves, long frozen, sprung afresh,—
Well'd like a fount-spring suddenly set free;
She praised the sun, extoll'd the bountiful earth,

And glad, thanksgiving eyes to God upraised.
Alathiel for her cared unceasingly,
And spake to her as mother to her child.
'God hath not, dear Costanza, given to me
A child of earth, but thee hath sent, of heaven,
That I should know in thee maternal love.
It is an act of His beneficence,
That thou, not mortal of my body born,
Art as my spiritual offspring ; so thou art !
Have I not foster'd thee with mother's milk
Of kindness,—fed thee like a cradled babe,
When, by misfortune, thou wert babe again ?'
'Yes—*mother* ! thus it is, the author thou,
None less than parent of my new-born mind !
(Oh ! first, own mother ! thee I ever love
Although thou hadst no pity for my tears.)
Am I not doubly blest in loving thee
With love scarce lesser than my deepest love ?
For I have learn'd, by grief, that, lacking love,
Whate'er the gifts, this world is dark and drear,—
A barren wilderness—nor sight nor sound !
Withouten love, no glories in the sky,
Withouten love, no music in the air,
Withouten love, no blossoms on the mead.'

The King with pride on our Costanza look'd,
Esteem'd her as a jewel to his crown,
Nay, even as a daughter to his heart ;
Yet, told of all the marvellous history,
More, that Martucci would the maiden wed,
And, wedded, to his native land repair,—
Him freed to part, or friend or prisoner,
Endow'd with wealth, and titles adequate,
And gave his nuptials royal countenance.

Martucci to Alathiel homage tender'd ;
One hand to her, and to Costanza one,
Between them, smiling, said, 'I love you both ;—
Shall not I love the saviour of my love ?
Donna Alathiel, wilt thou with us dwell ?'
Alathiel answer'd, 'Saracen am I !
But can I part from her, my single child,
Bestow'd by Him, whereto my duty flows ?
Yea, I will go ! for, whatsoe'er the strain,
Is nought to loss of my celestial boon.'

A day of mourning was it when they went ;
The monarch sorrowful,—the people sad
To lose their champion and miraculous maid ;
For transport safe, the King his best ship lent :
Alathiel, Carapresa, and the pair,
The port forsook, 'mid tears and blessings rife ;
The wind-god favour'd, and Costanza fair
To Lipara return'd,—Martucci's wife.



A FLIGHT IN SPACE.



A Flight in Space.

METHOUGHT, that, in the vast ethereal void,
I was upborne without the need of wings,
A charm'd bewilderment my soul employ'd,
And I became mine own imaginings ;—

On, on I floated, wisting nothing where,
Fill'd with a fearless ecstasy, and soon
Mine eyes gazed, wonder-struck, in sweet despair,
Upon the serrate surface of the Moon ;
Well, well I knew the ramparts gaunt and grim,
Though much exceeding our extremest guess,
And forms amorphous clung about the brim
Of black abysses, broad and bottomless ;
Ah ! what a weird and joyless scene I scann'd,
Of bald reflection and of shadows dark,
Great Tycho flung his figure o'er the land,
And Dörfel show'd, miles high, his vertex stark ;
No cloudy vapours veil'd their mighty crests,
The stars were shining in the long, long day,
The sun, that to those summits never rests,
A blazing ball suspent without a ray,—

A blazing ball suspent in vault of gloom !
And, where he shone, I saw adown, adown,—
Although his beams reach'd not the depths of doom,
In those chief craters that have gain'd renown—
First Ptolemy, and next Copernicus ;—
And all was terrible, unearthly all ;
Nor sight, nor sound that bringeth bliss to us,
No song of bird, no splash of waterfall,
Nor wind, nor river, nor of motion aught,—
For those dread creatures moved not to mine eye,
Even to think of them I am distraught,
Nor can I tell if they did creep or fly.
Like are they not to entities of Earth
(For, in their airless world, none is there breath),
When they began to be they had no birth,
And, if they cease, it is without a death.

Then, being comfortless, I thought of home,
And saw my loved Earth as a silver sphere,
Ornate with crepuscule of frothy foam,
And lucent, with a lustre very clear ;
Such was its splendour, that I cried aloud,—
' Rightly, O Moon, our decimal thou'rt shown !
And surely, if thou know'st, art very proud
My beauteous Earth thy primary to own.'
Next, to my vision was, in part, reveal'd
That hemisphere from Earth for ever hid,
Whereon, I think, were mists, which much conceal'd
A vast and varied champaign, in whose mid
I dimly saw an ocean, spreading wide,
And shores productive, and constructed things ;
Then fell the two weeks' night, so fall'n to hide
Beings to whom the dark not blindness brings,—

Not as the torpid creatures next our globe,
Existing scantily in a vacuous waste,
But as th' Allwise Creator doth enrobe
For joy complete—as there more gladsome placed.¹

On, on I floated, and, unknowing time,
Beheld the orb men dote on from afar,
And ever give a place in loving rhyme,
Hesper or Vesper, morn or even-star :—
It is a radiant world, than Earth more fair,
And, nearer to the Sun, as heaven more seeming,
Like Earth would be withouten cloud or care,
E'en as we think the Earth in happiest dreaming :
The Sun, in grandeur twice our god of day,
There doubly blesseth ; and that globe is clad
In glory that our language cannot say,—
Such, if the poet told, he would be mad.
Nor fogs, nor storms, nor biting frosts unkind,
But summer always, or unchanging spring,
And light, in which our eyeballs would be blind,
And warmth that to prostration would us bring ;
There, among scenes of nature consonant,
Are organisms dower'd with grace supreme,
Of whom my puny praise, irrelevant,
Would but conjecture, or a mockery, seem.

Abash'd, I look'd, then floated on and on,
Until, in holy awe, I came anear
The Fount of Light, Creation's paragon,—
Resting, enravish'd, on the outer sphere.

¹ This is derived from the conjectures of Hansen.

I saw the lustrous comets come and go,
The planets, in their fealty, swift careering,
The meteor ring, that gives the zodiac glow,
A whirling mass, a phosphor zone, appearing.

Then, in a moment, was I changed to be
Within the photosphere, the home of light ;
(And, henceforth, seeing, scarcely did I see,
But trulier knew, as whiteness knoweth white.)
Within the dread abode of Force unspent,
In primal Life, and in the womb of Cause,
Amid the nether worlds' arcana pent,—
The ruling Medium of Nature's laws :
Amid the colours prime, of various hue,
Which, in the things of Earth, reflection find,
And herb, and flower, and maiden-cheek endue,
The beauteous rainbow, or the prism, unbind ;
Amid the odours of the odours' spring,
That weakly touch the ken of mortal sense,
Amid the melodies that ever ring,
By men o'erheard somewhiles, unknowing whence ;
Amid the sheen that shineth aye unshaded,
And shadowless, where time is never told,
In elemental glories undegraded,
The antetypes of diamond and gold :

And so, entranced, by inner sight, I knew
The high Intelligences of the Sun ;
Angels I name them not, nor were it true
To term them as of flesh, or fancy-spun ;
Words fit them not, for they are not as we,
Wherefore describe I them with modest fear,—

They are all eye, and hence, I say they see ;
They are all ear, and so I say they hear ;
But their quick consciousness is not of sight,
Nor are they aught impressible by sound,
Perceiving, ever they perceive aright,
Their least perception passing thought profound :—
(Are there not tones on Earth which some not list,
Odours, most subtile, which the most not know,
Phantasms, which eye inspired, alone, doth wist,
Thoughts that, from germs not of the Earth, do
grow ?—)
Or, of their language, exercised unspoken,
If I should say they speak, 'twere wrongly said
Of attribute whereof we have no token,
Communion voiceless and unlimited !
Or, if I say they love, it were not well
So to express a faculty to blend
One in the other's nature, and to dwell
In perfect unison withouten end.
Were I to say they have a face or frame,
I should be telling a terrestrial dream,
For I have, with amazement 'kin to shame,
Beheld that Intellectual Presence beam :—
Their splendent world of light they permeate,
Unknowing motion, effort, space, or time,
Transform'd from zone to zone, from state to state,
At instant impulse of a will sublime ;
Less than omniscient, all untaught they know,
Less than omnipotent, need no control,
Less great than God, they cannot greater grow,
And yet they are not greater than Man's Soul.

Yea,—in My Soul, I their co-equal live,
Albeit incorporate with mortal clay,

In kindred sympathy I homage give,
Nor know I but that I shall be as They ;
With human Minds I think they converse keep,—
Genius, through Nature's influence, inspire,
And, or in waking thoughts, or dreams of sleep,
Imbue them with the empyrean fire ;
Forth, from their glorious home, they subtly shed
Rays that, unseen, through crust corporeal shine,
The body quick'ning, as with manna fed,
The spirit yielding sustenance divine.
O Sun ! I know not all my debt to thee,—
Great Source of joy, and these divinings fond,—
For, by thine awful glow, I faintly see
Thy God, and God of all the worlds beyond.



COLUMBUS AT SEVILLE.

' A CASTILLA Y A LEON
NUEVO MUNDO DIO COLON.'



Columbus.



Columbus at Seville.

A.D. 1505. ÆT. 70.

Is it the end?—so mundane honour faileth.
Lacketh that chief meed ; the Holy Sepulchre
Will not by me be rescued ; that great land
Which much exceedeth, which I yet could find
Not whilst I live, be proven ; that ripe harvest,
Golden-sheaved, not by my hand be gather'd :
The reaper hath the glory, not the sower ;
To track the pathless ocean needed one ;
A host can tread the track, and share the gain.
Diego, Fernando—equal as my sons,
Fruit of two mothers¹ equal in my love,
May ye inherit, and deserve the guerdon !

O Thou, beneficent Father ! Thou, my God !
Hear now my plea, forgive my discontent :
Is man to man ingrate ? how baser far
Ingratitude to Thee ! forget I not
The joyant day-dreams of my rising life ;
My marvellous salvation from the deep,
Saved, to unfold the secrets of the world !

¹ He was not married to the second.

O'erlook I not, Thou didst implant in me
The deep, fix'd knowledge of those unknown shores,
Whereby the Earth shall be a grander world,
The True Faith haply save unnumber'd souls.

My God ! Thy goodness to me has been great :
How had I clearer thought of Atalantis
Than that of Plato and of Marco Polo ?
Or than of Marinus and Alfraganus,
Of the rotund formation ? ay, the Globe !
How could I doubt the message deign'd by Thee ?
Didst Thou not give to me, by Martin Behem,
My help for sailing,—in the Astrolabe ?
Didst Thou not bring to me my Toscanelli,
And Juan Perez, at the Convent gate ?—
He that, as 'twere Thine angel sent to aid,
Foreran me to the Royal Ysabel.

A pricking pain it is, to scan those years
Of fretful waiting and vexations deep,—
Those eighteen years of earnest hope suppress'd,
Those droning years of fullest pulse of life,
Outspent in care, and penury, and scorn.
Well I remember thee, cold Cazadilla,
And thy repulse for John of Portugal !
Some better men there were in those drear days ;—
Gonzalez de Mendoza of Toledo,
Whose intercession to the Queen me brought.
And thou, De Quintanilla, thou, kind host,
Who, with the good St. Angel, call'd me back,
When, in a brief despair, from Spain I fled.

Then that strong strife of tongues, at Salamanca ;
Then stood I forth the Junta to dumbfound ;

To tell to men of schools and catechisms
What God had taught me—God alone could teach.
'Ha, ha !' say they, 'so thou dost well believe
That, sailing *down* thy globe, thou wilt return,
By God-sent gales compell'd, up-hill, to Spain !'
Or, 'Thou dost think that men feet upwards walk,
Like as the flies upon the ceiling there !'
Men posed to silence by an egg on end !
Yet wert thou one, friar Diego de Deza,
Dower'd with a soul receptive of the Truth.
That was well over, though it hurt my heart
To think—the wisest of the world reject me
How wiser thou, Columbus ? not thine own,
Not thine own wisdom ! yet how dared I then
To promise that, as undemonstrable
As things beyond the grave ?

Ah, happy next

Like a triumphant song, the contest o'er,
To me rang out the message of St. Angel,—
Return'd to tell the royal heart's resolve ;
'For mine own Crown of Castile will I do it,
E'en though I pledge my jewels.' Noble heart—
Bless thee, St. Angel !

Straight, the Queen to see ,

For aye, her gracious, sympathetic smile
Is printed in my soul ; for aye her words
Even as of honey and soft music blent,
My spirit soothing ; as a flood came joy ,
Forgat I then seven years of vassalage
In one blest moment—ever fresh and fair
Then, then it was that I the Throne besought
To let the treasures of the new-found world

Redeem the Holy Sepulchre, and wrest
From that proud Soldan false, the sacred shores.
Nor was the promise void, or vainly said ;
Let man propose, 'tis Thou alone permittest.

Come, Juan de Coloma, courtly scribe ;
Bring thou the parchments, let the words be writ :
Use now thy pencraft on a novel theme ;
Note, in indelible characters, that I,
Columbus, am henceforth ' High Admiral,'
Viceroy and governor of those lands and seas,
Far-reaching, fertile, affluent, serene,
To-day unknown, but surely to be found.

Now speed to Palos, to the bounteous Sea,
To get the Ships, to call my Mariners !
The Sovereigns say it ; read the royal rescript !
' This is Columbus, fit him for the Ocean ;'
Will ye not do it ? nay, it must be done.
Men, unconvinced, will lag at a behest ;
How feign to prove what only God can show ?
Dear Martin Pinzon, thou for one hadst faith ;
Dear brother of the Sea ! if, since that day,
Was somewhat to forgive, I have forgiven ;
Is not forgiveness the true test of love ?
I love thee ever.

Here my second Spring !
The past a dream, wherefrom I woke to act :
No more the days of hope unsatisfied,
No more for me the life of common things !
Meridian of my mortal years o'erpast,
I breathed as one who newly trod the earth,
Elastic, strong, my spirit fresh as air,

Prophetic, soaring over hindrances,
But onwards looking.

Next, the solemn day ;
'The day of my new world : Great God, Thou know'st
My faith was firm, that I went forth assured,—
To search ? ah, no—but certainly to find !
To Thee I knelt, with all my company :
The words from them of prayer, from me were
thanks,—
Thanks for the mission I was crown'd withal ;
Our auspice was to prosper—blest of Thee !

Yet, in that joy immortal, was I man,
And justly weigh'd the burthen of my task.
My fellows had some heat not wholly pure,
Fed by a fuel that doth waste too soon,—
A flame that rose and fell with lessening light,
Not, as the diamond, blazing unallay'd.
The old, familiar world had won their trust,
But, as that world retired, their manhood faded.
The land was lost, the trade-wind sped to west,
And they were drifting—into an abyss
From whence perchance no wind would ever waft ;
Behind them all they knew, before them nothing !
Hard to inform of things beyond their ken !
Who shall unveil the mystery of faith ?
Yea, unto me, in secret, all was well,
Whilst pointing, surely, to the destined coast.
The needle varies ! whither do they go ?
A course, they say, where Nature's self hath doubt !
What painful, sweet contention in my soul !
Those faint, rebellious spirits, murmuring loud,
Yet helping forward daily to the goal,

Threatening to stay, and do they knew not what,
Exasperate, fearing that they could not turn.
Then, on the day of desperation, came
The singing-birds, as heavenly harbingers !
And herbage floating, as from neighbouring shore.
No land descried,—they would no farther sail !
I told them I was serving God and Queen,
And they must onward with me to the end.

The Light of Heaven was in me, and I saw
A light of Earth from forth the latent world ;
Then said I,—also a new world of men.
Now, God be praised ! oh, uncompar'd to-morrow !
Has other mortal known of such to-morrow ?
O night, no night ! but as a day etern :
The fruiting of a life within the grasp,
The long, long happy dream, at last fulfill'd !
At earliest break of dawn they shouted ‘ Land ! ’
For ever new the day I kiss’d that shore,
And lifted hands first, in my promised world !
What ? my poor mariners—am I a god,
That ye bow down to me, like them of old
To Paul and Barnabas ?

Nay, still a King !
Prime king of boundless regions unexplored,
To be re-peopled in the faith of Christ !
Ay, king of men—a man to rule o’er men :
There dwelt in me a soul to reign and rule,—
Albeit perhaps my function was to find.

The sordid throng among, alas ! once more,—
From out that hope serene, to mortal cares,
Warring, heart-sick, with lust, and pride, and greed.

Ah, save that low turmoil, I had some joy—
Belike to human heart not oft is given !
Shall I misprize the rapture of my soul,
From visions of a virgin world foreknown ?
A world to me reveal'd, and by me found !
The gorgeous birds, and flowers, the luscious fruits,
The verdant groves' melodious choristers,—
Eke, but for man, a heaven terrestrial !

This work was done, when to the East again
I set my keel : ah, Pinzon, one-time friend !
Martin Alonzo, and dost *thou* forsake ?
Wouldst thou, indeed, outstrip me in the race,
And play the herald ? no, that must not be ;
Away to Spain ! to Spain, whate'er betide.

Shall I o'erlook, oh dread, extremest peril !
When 'mid the horrors of the raged Atlantic,
I waver'd in my faith, and, doubtingly,
My record trusted to the floating cask,
Lest with me, and my toil-worn mariners,
The firstlings of my labours should be lost ?
Shall I not own my tremulous content ?
When, next, I saw the Lusitanian King ?
Shall I that contrast with black doubt despise,
When my return to Palos was acclaim'd ?
Or, joyful day supreme ! Columbus call'd
With greeting to the Court ?

To be a King !
And, verily, a royal progress had I ;
Still, in mine eyes, the signs of welcome glister,
Still, in mine ears, the shouts of welcome ring !
And then, the cavalcade through Barcelona ;

Came forth the choicest chivalry of Spain—
A cohort of grandees and caballeros,
Colon escorting, for the conqueror's palm.
A royal day was that! myself a king,
And more than king,—a mission'd prophet-king.
Under a canopy of gold were seated
King Ferdinand, and gracious Ysabel.
As Sovereigns to Sovereign rose they to me ;
When I would offer homage, me upheld,
And bade me sit with them, as should a king—
The king of realms more vast and rich than theirs ;
When I to them my wondrous tale had told,
They both, in thankful adoration, knelt—
Due fealty yielding to the King of kings.
The *Te Deum* went to heaven, praising Him,
Great Giver of the glories of this world.

Then spake I that great vow—to pay to God,
Out of revenues unto me assign'd,
Suffice the Holy Sepulchre to save.

Bright Barcelona! I behold thee now,
As then thou wert to me ; thy sunny ways,
Thy pleasant palaces, with open doors
To him, the first of men ; thy windy walls,
Wash'd by the blue Internum, where I rode
Betwixt the king and prince, as equal man—
O'erlooking not the Providence on high ;
And, happier still, where oft-times I conversed
With the benignant Queen, anent the past,
And limning the beyond.

Then had I honour!
Then did they give to me a brave escutcheon,—

(I pray my heirs will bear it worthily !)
My own insignia quarter'd with the King's,
Castile and Aragon :

A CASTILLA Y A LEON
' NUESTRO MUNDO DIO COLON.

Then had I honour ! for the questing mind,
Wherever learning grew, was fill'd with joy—
Possess'd with phantoms of new things to be,
I the elect enchanter ! then they cried—
' Praise to Columbus—Christopher Columbus,—
He who hath dared to fathom the unknown ;
To whom was given knowledge passing knowledge ;
He who hath found a world !'

Again away !
With no scant trappings, but in wealth and power.
The Sovereigns, Columbus and Fonseca :—
Who would have licence let him ask of these.
Then to deny more easy than to grant !
Who could resist those high-born, proud hidalgos,
So fervent to be first in ways untried ?
I see thee now, Alonzo de Ojeda,
Thy prowess testing ere the need began.

A deedly conclave were we in that while :
The Admiral, De Soria, and Fonseca,
Francisco Pinelo, the treasurer,—
Beginning that which hath a far horizon,
The prelude planning of a birth of nations.
My labour great—proportion'd to its purpose ;
Nor less, than to explore the hidden Main
Where he, Great Khan, and Prester John held
kingdom.

Their work is done ; and in the Bay of Cadiz,
My seventeen caravels, proudly floating, wait,—
Equipp'd with all that might attach the Indies,
And marry well the new world to the old.
Then gave men reverence to me, and I wended,
Of squadron brave ordain'd 'High Admiral.'

O sunrise fair! that gaily seem'd to smile
To hail the entrance of a world to come :
The Isles Canaries—then away, away !
Until the first-born of the new delight,
Dominica, and then, amid the Antilles,
Gladden'd with odorous gales and sylvan shores ;
There found the rich anana, and there too,
As if to match the bitter with the sweet,
Saw we the limbs of men prepared for food.
Next, pass'd uncounted, came the Virgin Islands,
And then our new-world home, Hispaniola ;
Then rest once more at my La Navidad.

Rest in unrest ! for henceforth was I shown
How this sublunar world with trouble teems
Wherever man doth turn it to his uses.
O cherish'd idols of inventive thought !
Are ye to be the origin of pain ?
Gone my first foot-print on the land of promise,
My fortress and my garrison no more !
Yet had I hope and courage, and went on ;
Took firmer stand, and, on the water'd plain,
Built to thee, O Royal Ysabel !
The primal city of the new-found world.
How like a fever'd dream the chequer'd days,
Until again I planted foot on Spain !

A vexéd dream, of pain and joy and sorrow ;
A tangled web, an incoherent tale.
The cry for gold, gold insufficient found ;
The ships to Spain to satisfy that call ;
Dark discontent of men, who look'd no higher
Than transient enjoyment, yet fulfill'd
Their part as instruments to future good :—
The plot of Bernal Diaz, well reveal'd :
And of the joys, I do bethink me now
Of that entrancing passage mountains o'er.
Great God, I thank Thee for that prospect fair,
Which, with my soul, I think, eternal lives :—
The flower-enamell'd plains, the branching ferns,
The giant cedars that of ages spake,
The towering palms, the rivers, and the birds.
More gold—and more, unsated still my need—
My need for favour in the eyes of men.
Found had we not the earthly paradise,
And bent ourselves to furnish it with woe ?
Behold a problem difficult to solve,
That grand results of benefit to man
Must the ordeal pass of sin and pain.
Then sail'd I forth to Cuba, and, more south,
First saw the beauteous land, Jamaica named ;
And, sailing on, that labyrinth of islets,
Like an enchantment the wide sea adorning,
Henceforth by men to be 'Queen's garden' named ;
(Told of by Mandeville and Marco Polo,
From the Great Khan, perhaps, not far removed.)
Yet were these days of dolour ; for the joys
Outweighed were by trials pitiless.
My much-loved mariners, uncomforted,
Unbless'd with Heaven's supernal visitings,
Took not serenely those privations dire,

Hard toil of day, misgivings of the night,—
Sustain'd alone by wonder at new things,
With peril faint, and lacking utmost faith.
And I, unstrung, a tranquil sea attain'd,
Swoon'd in collapse—a sickness like to death.

They bore me to my city—as one dead.
Mine eyes re-open'd—oh, the sweet surprise !
Angel of Providence, Bartholomew !
Whence cam'st thou, brother loved?—divinely sent—
For to my aid thou comest, when my power
Is threaten'd ; e'en when Pedro Margarite
Took ships and fled, with falsehood, to the throne.
Be thou Adelantado, rule with me,
To give me double strength—from Thee, my God !

Here I recall intrepid, strong Ojeda,
Who seized, with guile, the brave chief Caonabo,
And brought him, bound behind him, to the town.

These were some happier days ; the royal pair,
By Torres, an approving missive sent,
And, with thee, dear Bartholomew ! to aid,
I strove to form and regulate a State.
And, as a king, I ruled, not all in vain ;
Yea, to the Indian people gave we battle,
They boasting much to drive us from the land—
Our little band against uncounted thousands !
But thou, Ojeda, wert invincible,
Supporting us to hold, and to subdue :
Then fell the yoke upon them, and henceforth
Paid they their tribute, in the long'd-for gold.
This breedeth some compunction in my heart.
What rights had we above these simple men,

To master them, and next their curse to be?
May we, for good, cause any creature pain?
It was the will of God, that o'er new lands
The faith of Christ should spread; the cry was 'gold;'
My power was gold, and power must be maintain'd.
To cultured minds, how strange a charm has gold!
Hath not its touching some Satanic spell,
To poison blood, and make man less than man?

Now, I remember, first I felt the bite
Of that arch-traitor, Pedro Margarite.
His lies had rooted, and their fruit was shown
In thee, Aguado, once my favour'd friend.
Juan Aguado, High Commissioner,—
Dominion vaunting o'er the Admiral!
Ay, and he had it; and I gave him place.
That came a heavy blow; albeit 'tis sure
There will be verdict for me, in this world.
So thou wilt go, Aguado, back to Spain,
Back, with the budget of my misdemeanours?
To tell them I have not done what I have,
To tell them I have done what I have not!
I will go with thee then, there thee confront,
And put to shame thy foolish, false report.
My God was gracious to me in that hour,
And gave to me a boon, by Miguel Diaz,
No less than those exhaustless mines of Hayna,
The same, I think, as onetime Ophir named—
Sought by King Solomon for the Holy Temple.

Unjust reproach! that I was alien,—stranger;
How alien, as the wide world's citizen?
How stranger, who had brought them wealth
fame?

The whole earth his one country, man his nation,
Whose pure, sole purpose is to serve mankind.
None else, I love thee well, my native Genoa,
E'en with the love a man his mother loves :
Genoa *la superba*, Genoa, my first home !
City of mountain-side, and ships, and palaces,
City of commerce, and of sea-going men.

God bless'd me onward, and despite the storms,
(Which must be for the things surpassing man,)
Vouchsafed safe passage back to sunny Spain.
My mariners ! would ye your captives slay—
Sinning for food, your trust in Heaven forgot ?

Quick, to the Port, the people onward crowd,
A sick and sorry company to see,
In tatter'd guise, with cruel hardships worn.
Colon among them, a Franciscan monk,
Corded, begown'd, and bearded ; was not I
Reft of my power, my office stultified,
By weak Aguado's charter ? therefore now,
Until restored, a man unpropertied ?

That check soon over ; not for long I wore
The garb of deprivation : on to Burgos ;—
'The Admiral,' in lowly gabardine,
His escort proud, with gold, and captive men.
'Columbus, welcome ! why this humble mien ?
Art not thou still our Admiral, our Viceroy ?'
My grace to thee, O traitorous Margarite,
And wily Boyle ! so ended thy designs.

Wise Ferdinand, sweet-smiling Isabella !
Well did ye estimate my troublous tale,

Incline the ear to my prophetic aim,
And grandly grant equipments for the search.

Through thee, Fonseca ! Oh, if called to judge
thee,
I would not punish thee with torture more
Than that thou gav'st my soul, by thy delays.
A bishop hinders what a king commands !
Two years of waning life, unfruitful, lost !
The rich, far-stretching Continent unfound.
Now on the threshold of my last reward,
Thus—thus to be impeded—it was pain.

The struggle ended ; and again I went ;
E'en as a greyhound straining at the leash,
To break the cord, and seize upon the game.
Here I condemn me that, too much incensed
With base Fonseca's minion, Breviesca,
He following me, with insults, to the strand,
I struck the dastard renegade to earth.
Why, in that lofty moment, did he tempt me
To loose on him my pent-up agonies ?

Forth from San Lucar ! on a new-mark'd course ;
Who that the new would gain, must quit the old.
One cask of water left ! but God is good ;
And, on that day of need, loom'd Trinidad.
Then found I Paria, which I think must be
Near to, or part of, some far-spreading shore ;
For there are freshets, as of mighty rivers,
Whose sources are not islands : and I think
The influences benign that there abound—
Splendours of earth and sky, exuberant joy,
Amid the beaming of unclouded suns,

Cool'd by soft zephyrs like the breath of heaven,
Betoken that not far from this was fix'd
The Eden told as man's first dwelling-place.
I say not but that here the current flows
From out the fountain of the Tree of Life.

The past grows dim : henceforward, meagre joy !
Alas ! such griefs, to but forget were bliss !
They cannot be forgotten, yet it seems
That by-and-by, in life, accustoms sorrow ;
Emotion dulls, or sweet or sour come liker,
Time, growing dearer, more is part with us,—
E'en as ourselves have largely merged in Time ;
And so events have less disparity.
The first Ingratitude impresseth deeply ;
But after that, all ingrates group in one.
Our early joys have each a separate being ;
The later joys blend, like the hues at sunset,
And vanish as the setting of the Sun.

Not so in all,—my dear Bartholomew !
Not so of meeting thee ; such joy as that,
In youth or age alike, stands out alone,—
Not mixing with the mass of circumstance.
And healthful vigour came at seeing thee,
Adelantado—ever faithful brother.
How fares then, in this while, Hispaniola ?
Too long detain'd ! a wound too deep for cure.
Men turbulent, on vicious purpose bent,
Broke up the springs of order, stood at bay
Against authority, and mischief bred.
My soul approves that I was merciful,
And, with much patience, urged them to do '

This know'st thou, Roldan ; thou, of rebels, chief !
But for the just is justice ; and I dealt
Strong-handed justice, to defend the good.
Wherefore 'The Admiral,' wherefore made a king,
If not to govern ? this my tyranny ;
Bishop Fonseca, thou must know they lied,
Therefore didst greatly lie, accusing me
To be unjust—how greatly ! when they sent
A Bovadilla to subvert my power.

As once to Job, the messengers of evil
To me came, saying, 'He has seized thy house,
Thine ownings plunder'd, and proclaim'd thee felon.'
Is this Columbus, who has found a world—
Is this Columbus, who expended life
In long night-watchings, and in irksome toil,
To give a wider compass to mankind !
You see 'The Admiral,' but he serves the Crown ;
What wills the Crown, whate'er, let that be done.
Put on the manacles, take, take my hands !
And thou too, dear Bartholomew ! come—come !
To prison go we, link'd as galley-slaves.
I thought that Christ, my Lord, was one time bound,
With scorn assail'd, and flagellate with thongs.

Thus—thus to Spain, thus to Iberia's strand !
Brought they their Admiral,—Viceroy of a world.
Then pitiful were they—the men of Spain :
Columbus pitied ! for Columbus—pity—
Merciful God ! had I for *pity* lived ?
I thank Thee that my heart could bear that thought.
Here stay'd they not, but, warming into zeal,
Rose to hot indignation at my wrongs.
Then went a shout of shame, a horrent cry,

A sound of anger, which, advancing, grew,
A people's tumult, echoing through the land ;—
'In manacles the finder of a world !'

The sovereigns heard that cry : the Queen had read
My letter to a lady of the Court—
(For shackled hands may write not to the throne ;)
Then sent they to me, and I doff'd my chains
To put on robes for stately Granada.
From kindly words some scanty solace springs,
And, recking not of verbal penitence,
Sincere regrets can salve indignities ;
But when, at seeing me, the Queen did weep,
I wept to think those eyes should weep for me !
O gentle Isabella ! noble heart !
I bless my God for serving such an one.
Then were the fountains of my soul refresh'd,
And I forgave,—yea, in my soul forgave,
Whate'er of anguish from her act had sprung.

Two years they said—my reinstatement then !
Again to common life—it cannot be !
For him to whom 'tis given to open out,
It must not be to stagnate in the found.
For then I knew, as now, that time is brief,
And I must give, with undeclining zeal,
Life's latest issues to the work of God.
Rounding the stormy Cape, had not De Gama
His nation dower'd with wealthy Calicut ?
Should I not find, (as still I think there is,)
A strait that tendeth to the Indian seas,
From out the ocean where my lands are known,
And superadd unto my vast new world
The rich resources of the glowing East ?

The good day came ; and forth, to broad Atlantic,
With, first, fair progress tow'rd's our wonder-land ;
Bartholomew, best Brother ! Son Fernando !
Praise unto Him who gave, and you preserved ;
An anxious voyage had we—big with promise,
And comfort were ye to me in those hours :
In sooth, keen sufferings were they, lingering sorrows,
In perils uttermost of land and sea ;
Yet are they summ'd into a little chapter,
And, with an even judgment, I survey them,
As doth a watcher looking from the Pharos,—
All objects scanning at a moment's glance.

A bitter baulk was that, when, seeking haven,
We craved admittance at Hispaniola ;
Pompous Ovando ! thou didst well, methinks,
To turn away the finder of thy realm.
Yet sped we well without thee : and right soon
The coast of Terra Firma hail'd once more.
Then found we Cape Honduras, and I hoped
Near that peninsula the strait desired.
It is not far, or if no strait be there,
The land is narrow to the Indian seas.¹

Now, vext with raging storms, we found in time
The wish'd-for golden shore Veragua.
'Twas here Adelantado shrewdly search'd,
And did confirm me in my earlier thought ;—
Aurea Chersonesus surely this.
Thou didst agree with me, Bartholomew,
And hadst establish'd here a settlement,

¹ Later discoveries, and the adoption of 'the Panama route,' show this conjecture of Columbus to have been prophetic.

Save some mischance, and ills unparallel'd.
Back,—back to Spain ; still, there the strait *must* be ;
And men ere long shall take that course to Ind.
God's will be done ! He lets me mark the way ;
That whence Columbus turn'd, may others speed.

Lo, then my soul had succour, for I saw
Bright visions of the night, and heard His voice :
'Why frettest thou, O man, and lovest heart ?
Are not thy troubles as of man with man ?
Is there not promise thou shalt be sustain'd ?'—
At this, what matter'd when the woe befell,—
My ships ashore, my faithful company
Left, unprovided, on the Indian strand ?
Then was it, that, denied supplies of food,
God gave me the Eclipse, and hid the Moon,
To show the Indian I must be preserved.
Now bless thee, Diego Mendez, constant friend,
That wert the chosen means empower'd by Him,
My heavenly Father, to go thence and save.
Undaunted by one failure, thence again,
This time with brave Fiesco to thine aid.
Go then canoes, go fragile boats to sea,
For me the day of miracles survives !
Pass weary months, pass quickly in my thought ;
Months follow months, and yet they will return.
Ah, Porras ! thou wert one who gave me pain
By thy desertion in that time of need ;
Thou too wert baffled : and the ships *did* come.
Unto God's mercy, not to thy good-will
Be that ascribed, Ovando ; so I sail'd
Once more to mine own city,—'Isabella.'
There, with some tenderness, some deference,
Was I received and foster'd,—there to wait,

Enough to grieve o'er my perverted plans ;
Beknow of cruel laws I had no power
To mitigate, o'erhear of deeds inhuman
Which tore my heart to crying—' Not to me,
O Good Creator ! not to me, impute
These sufferings of thy creatures,—not to me !'
Ovando, thou didst smile, with some pretence
Of fairness to me ; but thou wert not fair.
I fear, lest thou hast weight'd the account
Which I must cast with God : may He forgive !

In storms to Spain :—it seemeth that my life
Must end in storm ; what mind e'er rests at peace,
The goal ungain'd, the recompense withheld ?
How rest, whilst, lost my care, the evil rule
Yet banes Hispaniola ? profitless !
My journey to Segovia, for now
My urgent prayer brings no responsive tones :
The Queen is dead ; the Court is dead to me.
Ah, Ferdinand ! thy chilly surface-smiles
Gave doubting comfort to my yearning soul ;
What ! thou wouldst grant me titles, properties,
In this old world, where I have nothing earn'd,
My just inheritance denying yet,
In those dominions I have won for thee !
Is not the compact sacred ? thou shalt lose
It breaking, more than thou withhold'st from me,—
In forfeit of thine honour among men.
Thy glory is inglorious, O King !
All is in vain ! my letters or my voice :
Thou too, O friend, Amerigo Vespucci,
To right me failest, though thy heart be true.

O queenly Isabella ! sunk with thee

My last, best hope : O truest, highest friend,
Thou, best as woman, Lady first of Spain ;
Pure pride it is to think thou me didst love
In like of love wherewith man honours man,
The flame of friendship ; why then art thou gone,
Why, why evanish'd ere my task is done,
Me aidless leaving ?

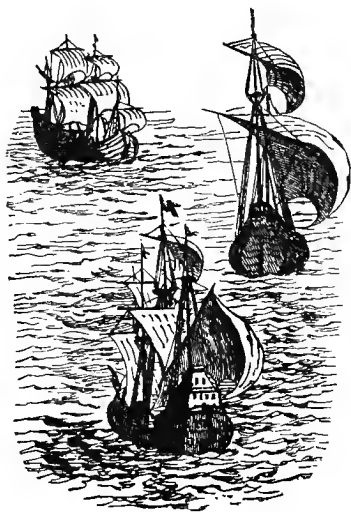


Dear Bartholomew,
I pray thee to the throne, and plead my cause :
Tell Queen Juana how I wait and fade.
The child of Isabella will not fail ;
She will give ear, and, with a yielding heart,
Restore my dignities. Assert my claims !
Show that I leave her, more than she can grant,
In wealth or titles : tell her I can do
A work to raise Castile in might and glory
Above all earthly kingdoms.

He is gone ;
He will achieve his purpose : not for me,—
But for my heritage. Increasing tithes,—
Revenues still enlarging—endlessly,
At Genoa garner'd, shall the fund augment,
Which I have set apart to be applied
To last redemption of the sacred tomb.

The body weakens, but the soul is strong :
O Soul ! what wilt thou do, so resolute,
Left, left alone,—bereft thy minister ?
I am my Soul ; I have not ended here :
Are there not worlds to find I yet can seek ?
Have I not knowledge, and the will to act ?
Such—such the ways of God ; and sure it is
I have been highly favour'd ; for to me
Was given, by faith, perception of some things
Not gain'd by human learning ; I foresaw
Those unseen regions,—as I now foresee
The heaven whereto I go. Shall I essay
To teach men uninspired the graces of
That Country where the King is just ; and where
All promise is fulfill'd ? The kings of Earth
Owe justice, and should heed this holiest law
Of Him, their mighty Prototype, on high.
Yea, I will praise Him ! for I have been
 bless'd :
Has not the beam celestial lit my path ?
Has not miraculous care o'ershadow'd me ?
Have not I heard soft whispers from the skies ?
May I not think of thee, base Bovadilla,
When thou wert lost, and my weak barque was
 spared ?
Did I not touch the highest peak of fame,
To be down dragg'd into the pit contempt ?
Not so, not so ! forgive me, Thou Most Good :
My dreams sublime, and their accomplishments,
Have much exceeded all my toils and trials ;
And onward gaze I, with a trustful heart,
The outcomes heeding of my mortal life.
Yea, on those shores, to and through me dis-
 closed,

Will flourish puissant empires, unenslaved ;
The dark will be illumined, knowledge spread,
And His true Faith will permeate that world.
The land of Heaven is, yet, for me to find,
And on the Earth to me shall justice come !
To me will come, and men will say—' COLUMBUS.'



SONNETS.



Sleep.

THIEF of the mind—he, at the term of toil,
Serpent-like creeps upon the jaded sense,
And, when no longer we can make defence,
Binds us in death ; anon we crack the coil,
Fresh as an amaranth the trickster foil,
And, with renascent courage, chase him thence !
Ah, then eftsoons his wiles will recommence,
So of nigh half our days he doth us spoil.
O life no life,—O death not death indeed !
Is there not joy unsought, and love unfound—
Know we all sights and sounds in Nature's store—
Do not our thoughts new thoughts for ever breed?—
That, as the dormouse or the drowsy hound,
We sleep, and sleep, and sleep,—and wake no more.

Silence.

HUSH—hush ! it is the charm of nothingness,—
A sweet estate wherein there is no sweet ;
A music true, though no vibrations beat ;
A passive mistress, cold and passionless—
Bestowing not, yet having power to bless,
Until, in holy love, we kiss her feet.
O joy wherein no soul a friend may greet,
O Thou that giv'st no comfort in distress,—
Why do we love thee, Silence? Art thou then
The mystic, ghostly Mother of mankind,
From forth whose womb we sprang without a throe?
To Thee resort for rest and peace all men ;
In Thy embrace serene, pure joy they find,—
Art Thou the very Heaven whereto we go?

Silentium Noctis.

VOID—void—all void ! the things that were, are not—
I, but as nothing,—with myself alone
In the Still Darkness : not a ray—no tone
To tell of being, or of space or spot ;
No ghostly glow refulgent,—one black blot
The face of Nature, and the Sun that shone !
The beauteous Universe I once had known
Lost to the senses, as a love forgot.
Yet—yet I am ! and, thinking, see, and hear
The tongueless voices in their silent tune,
And bask in light that lives beyond the Sun :
Ah, wherefore is it Darkness bringeth fear,—
Wherefore, O ominous Darkness ! scare so soon
The life of Light, that hath so late begun ?

Music.

VOICE of the Air, if silent, ever near,
That somewhen, inly, to the mind doth speak,
And, resonant to them that deftly seek,
Comest, at call, from thine æthereal sphere ;
MUSIC,—Attendant-Angel of the ear,—
Thou that dost breed oblivion sweet, and eke
Subdue the stern, and suscite the meek,
And bring, by fitful change, the smile or tear,—
Hast thou not part with the celestial frame
Whereeto, by hidden ties, the soul is kin ?—
Thine the one language of the heavenly quire,
Thine the one utterance to all hearts the same,
Whether outspoken in the thunder-din,
Or in the softer accents of the lyre.

Æquo Anímo.

HAVE *thou* content !—are there not men unfed,
Who wander forth in empty nakedness,
No pillow owning for the head to press,
The sky their coverlet, the ground their bed ?
Are there not some who crave no mental bread,
Whose passive moments no sweet dreamings bless,
Whom no love vexeth in a sweet distress,
Who have no hopes, no yearnings fond, no dread ?
Have thou content !—alas, alas ! in vain,—
Whilst still I seek, and, fondly seeking, fail,
Whilst aspiration gaineth not the goal,
Whilst holiest mysteries a blank remain,—
And teachings of the wisest not prevail
To satisfy the hunger of the Soul.

Sight.

IF still, with closéd eyes, I see thy face,
What is it but thine impress on my mind?
And though, henceforth, I were for ever blind,
Those lineaments mine inner sight would trace :
Or if on earth no more thou holdest place,
To me unveiléd beam thy features kind,
Brought by a force that cerements cannot bind !
Or from the world terrene, or æther space,
Thou comest at the bidding of my will,
Shall not I love thee ever, and thou me?
Art thou not calling, when for thee I call?
O friend belovéd, whom death doth not kill,
Come ! for the vision of my Soul to see,—
To tell me absence is not death in all.

True Love.¹

(RESPONSE TO A SONNET WRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR OF
'ORION.')

LOVE that hath once been love will ne'er expire,
What doth not die the Soul shall not forget,
And, though Beloving should not Love beget,—
It lives,—an inextinguishable fire !
Friendship forgotten were unreason dire,—
As if to say they part who never met,
Or, whoso never owed should own a debt,
Or, creatures of the midden do aspire !
Wherefore, O Man or Mistress, tell me not
Thou loved'st me erst, but love me now no more ;
None eye hath seen a non-existent spot,
What never was, leaves nothing to deplore ;
Tell me the Diamond in its Mine will rot,
Or that the Gold will perish in the ore !

23d Jan. 1830.

¹ See Appendix.

Analogy.

Was it a dream—that keen undoubting joy,
Which I, but now, as if for aye, did know?
Was it a dream—the vision that did glow
In light that light itself doth not destroy?—
Was it a dream, that did my soul annoy
With anguish of unutterable woe?—
Was it a dream, that in my mind did grow,
And every subtlety of thought employ?
Kin of my heart! real things, the loved and lost,
How come ye to me, and again forsake?
(As waifs from out the sea of Time uptost,)
Do *ye* in dreamland habitation make?
Were *ye* then dreams, that bitter tears have cost?
Is such the life wherefrom, at death, we wake?

Of God.

FATHER of all, by beings on Earth once named,
Albeit they cannot know Thee—what, or where ;
To Whom mankind, in hope, or in despair
Appeal, in fatuous ignorance, unshamed,—
Though truth and reverence be thus defamed
By loving adoration, vow, and prayer
Vaguely devoted to the viewless air,
Lest men, for worse ingratitude, be blamed !
Father of all, why seek we—not to find ?
Why list we, ever yearning, not to hear ?—
Save in the wonders of the Earth or Sky ;
Why, to Thine Omnipresence, are we blind ?
Why to Thy children dost Thou not appear ?
Is then eternal Silence—Thy reply ?

Mystic Harmonies.

SOMEWHILES, when into vacancy I gaze,
And seem bereft of life, or rapt in thought,
My soul is with divinest music fraught,—
Soft accents hearing of celestial praise !
In notes unwritten, and in wordless lays,
Anthems are singing to me, all unsought,—
Each time I listen new vibrations caught,—
Till I in joy am lost, and sweet amaze.
Whence are ye then, ye tones of heaven ? for sure
Ye are not visitings of human kind ;
Are ye embalméd memories, sublimed ?
Or, of the hereafter, do ye come to lure
My soul from sensuous seekings unrefined,
With strains supernal, by the Angels chimed ?

Fame and Immortality.

WHAT being hast thou, much desired Fame,
That men should immolate themselves to thee?
Art thou indeed an immortalitie,
Or only what thou seem'st? a name—a name!
Art thou in one, a glory and a shame,
So to be lauded unto extasie,—
And yet be but the mind's infirmitie,
The cause of folly, and the source of blame?
Speak, speak! my heart, is there not something more
Than reputation, that true fame can give,—
Some prize for which ambition is not crime?
Ah! is it nothing, when this world is o'er,
To reign in mortal bosoms, and to live
In ceaseless echoes to the end of time!

Peace.

PEACE is to man not peace, but torpid soul,
Idlesse corporeal, or a mental sleep,
It is to be as happy as the sheep,
Supine, contented with an earthly dole.
Alas, alas! how shall my heart control
The strong unrest, that doth with doubting keep?
Disquietude, amid compunctions deep,—
Attaining to so little of the whole!
Of Heaven is peace!—Oh, sunny, ripply sea
Withouten shore :—till then the normal strife,
Of false and true—the contest, ceaselessly,
Against the wrongs wherewith the world is rife ;
The struggle of the Conscience with the Me :—
Peace is the stagnant pool, the rivulet is Life !

Double Life.

BLENT in one mortal life, are oft two lives ;
One is a life of toil, and trick, and gain,
Of vapid pleasure, and of skin-deep pain,
Along a miry course, as Mammon drives ;
A life that after the Material strives,
Up-building works that, for a while, remain,
In heaps of gold, or monuments as vain,
To be but nothing when the end arrives !
The other life is that of heart and soul,
Of passion, and of poetry, and song ;
Of depths and heights of sorrow and of mirth ;
It brings no profit, as it hath no goal,
And, though it all doth unto earth belong,
Subsists but in oblivion of the Earth !

On the South Downs.

A SONG to thee, O Nature ! whilst the hills
My senses render fullest sympathy ;
Above the world of men, and blent in thee,
A joy that is thy joy my bosom fills,
And I claim sonship, mindless of ' the ills
That flesh is heir to ; ' nought is now to me
Than the primeval sward, and sky, and sea,
Boundless—as thy companionship instils.
O Mother Nature, take my heart in thine !
O Mother Nature, I in thee am lost !
O Mother Nature, take me as thy child !
Why know I this sublimity divine,
If not from thee ? me take at any cost !
I had not loved so, if thou hadst not smiled.

St. Preux.

LOVE came and spake to me, 'She is thy mate ;'
I said, 'O Love, how will she know 'tis so ?'
Whereat, all suddenly, the passionate throe
Flooded my heart, and certified my fate.
'Ah,' quoth I, 'be she heedless, I will wait,
Until her pulses, beating fast or slow,
At tone or touch, in time with mine shall go,—
Until, together, gain we Heaven's gate.'
Sweet, gentle Fawn ! caught in the silken snare,—
Unconscious how it wound about her charms !—
She whispered 'Nay,' admonished me, 'Beware,'
Then lent her spirit unto soft alarms,
And then,—when only left for me to dare,—
Murmured 'I love,' and melted in my arms.

Abelard.

I SAW, and loved,—love, with no respite, told ;
She answer'd, ' Leave me ! for thy speech is rude ; '
I, unabash'd, in love's beatitude,
Knelt to her, heart to heart, and cried, ' Behold,
Mine is true-love, oh, let me thee enfold ! '
She said, ' I pray thee rise, nor me delude ;
All I can give thee, is my gratitude,—
Nay, nay, I love thee not ! thou art too bold.'
' Then spake I, ' I am strong, thou shalt not go !
I read thine answer in those eloquent eyes,
E'en while thy ruddy lips do say me " No,"—
Thy soul elects me, as thy tongue denies.'
' Ah, wherefore,' sigh'd she, ' dost thou urge me so !
Is it then Love, that bade me tell thee lies ? '

Ninon.

HAVE I not held dominion?—say I, whence?
Truly I know not, but the sweet effect
That men become my slaves. I can elect
Unto the highest heaven of soul and sense
Him whom I deem so worthy. Or pretence,—
When Love not lights his torch, will none reject;
This, this my sovereignty,—whilst still bedeckt
In Beauty's gifts, to yield them recompense.
My flowing hair,—my never-failing eyes,—
Eyes that could conquer when I near'd fifteen,
Charms that could madden, to be fool, the wise:
Must—must they wither? must I quit the scene?
Despair to think!—my spirit brave replies,
'Yet, by thy magic, shalt thou reign—their queen!'

Cathedral of Cordova.

As in a forest seeming infinite,
A portal and an altar everywhere,
The soul is moved to lofty thought, and prayer
Unto the Omnipresent One of might,
So had the pious Moslem purpose right,
Who did at Cordova this temple raise ;
For when he wander'd in the vasty maze
Of columns rich, in every hue bedight,
He knew no spot where he must offer praise,
Nor where he last was prostrate, nor the door
Wherethrough he gain'd the labyrinthine floor—
Unnoting which, among the nineteen ways ;
Nor found he there incitement to adore,
Than as the thankful heart its homage pays.

BETWEEN SEVILLA AND BADAJOZ,
4th May 1860.

Lincoln Cathedral.

I'VE seen the Lyncolne Mynster, on the hill
Which, for deep centuries, it hath ycrown'd ;
And, in beholding, such delight have found
As our forefathers' pious minds did fill,
At the evolving from a fervent will
A work yet onwards, endlessly, renown'd.
Æthereal Fancy ! thou art here unbound,
Roving from human deeds of subtile skill,
Pillar and lancet-arch and tracery rare,
Proportion whose perfection bears a spell,
The votive chapels, proofs of holy care,
With roof by worthy Willson carvéd well,
Unto the destination of my prayer,
Where Thou, great God, beneficent, dost dwell.

Richmond Hill.¹

WAKING, I saw a valley far and wide
Outspread beneath, the vision of my dream ;
It was of Earth, yet not of Earth did seem—
None having mark of toil ; on every side
Fair mead and forest lay, in verdant pride,
And, as a pearl 'mid emeralds, a stream,
O'er whose broad face the glorious Sun did gleam,
Athwart, meandering, did calmly glide :
No pain was there, no false exciting charm,
But joy serene that might eternal be,—
Whereat, much wond'ring, I inspired did rise
Into a phrensy, and, with sweet alarm,
Knew I beheld the long-famed Arcadie,
Phantasm of Heaven, type of Paradise.

¹ See Appendix.

Ordination.

THIS day, O friend, is thy life's purpose changed ;
For thou art chosen from the sons of men,
In the great cause to labour ; back agen
To call an errant nature, long estranged
From primal state of virtue, and deranged,
Until, as things diverse, the Now and Then.
Be brave of heart, and voice, and fertile pen ;
Words will not waver whilst for aye unchanged,
The promises of Him who faileth not.
Before thy mental vision will uprise
Fulfilments that the name of Sin outblot ;
The tale of evil will provoke surprise ;
Restored is Man, and Earth a heavenly spot !
Behold the end whereto God's agent tries.

Photography.

1842.

By title new, for added gift, O Light !
We now shall praise thee, Limner at our will
Of all thou dost irradiate, with skill
Outrivalling the emulative flight
Of human power ; for the discriminate might
Of Nature's hand thy purpose doth fulfil.
Ye, PORTA, GALILEO, NEWTON, if that still
For earth ye care, are sharing our delight—
From pride estranged, yet glad that thus your toil
Hath glorious fruiting ! and ye, of to-day,
Who, tracking onwards through the tangled coil
Of philosophic truth, now with them may
Claim brotherhood,—nor shall your lustré soil,
NIEPCE, and DAGUERRE, and TALBOT, and CLAUDET !

Wellesley.

FRIEND, I possess with joy a Gift ¹ most rare,
Form'd of the gems erewhile the thoughts of one
Great in all difficult things,—a mental Sun
Gilding where'er he glances ; and my care
Shall be to prize it justly, and compare,
Till, like the skill'd Anatomist, I've won
The full idea from fragment seen, and spun
From its sweet poesy, conception fair—
A noble Mind ; at which I'll gaze and gaze,
Intent by sympathy to emulate,
Praying, all men may, in the latter days,
Aspire unto such high and glorious state ;
And, in mine age, I'll list the young men's praise,
Whilst of his Gift, and WELLESLEY, I prate.

¹ '*Primitiæ et Reliquiæ*,' 1840—then first published, and sent by the Marquess Wellesley to the author. The Sonnet is addressed to the bearer of the Book.

John Britton,

THE ANTIQUARY, ON HIS BIRTHDAY : AGE 70.

7TH JULY 1841.

WELL it beseems thee, BRITTON, to have gain'd
Fulness of years ; the Past doth honour thee,
As thou the past hast honour'd ; thou shalt be
A long, long age in memory retain'd,
With those stone deeds whose glories have remain'd,
And hallow'd now by ' hore antiquitie,'
As is the storm-enduring Druid tree,
Or echoing aisle, with storied windows stain'd.
Ancient of days, but aye a boy in heart,
Still hoping on, with sympathies unspent,
Example to the Apathist, thou art !
Would that thy frame might fitly represent
Thy spirit's freshness ! then should ills depart,
And the grey tyrant, Time, for once, relent.

Frederick William Robertson,

MINISTER OF TRINITY CHAPEL,
BRIGHTON.

(Written 15th August 1853—the day of his death.)

So might it seem—now the brave voice is still
For ever, and the noble heart at rest—
That, as a planet leaveth in the west
No trace of the bright course it did fulfil,
Thy life, dear ROBERTSON ! no deeds of skill
In marble, or in gaudy pigments drest,
Nor folios, thy labours to attest,
No monuments to mark thine earnest will :¹
Of the Unseen—unseen, unwrought, sublime,
Thy work is woven in the Spirit of Man ;
Deep meanings of the Mediatorial plan
Told by thy eloquent tongue's euphonious chime.
Hush ! the truth-tones his ringing voice began
Are echoing onward through the waves of Time.

¹ Nothing of any importance, of Mr. Robertson's writings, had then been published.

Sortain.

(AFTER HEARING HIM PREACH.)

IF I might envy, it should be, SORTAIN,
Thine heritage of intellectual joy ;
For well I know that in this world's annoy
All other harbourage compares in vain :
Sweet are these earthlings ! but or shine, or rain,
Each in fruition breedeth its alloy ;
Hourling delights, born to themselves destroy !
How would we have the mutable remain ?
Oh ! to *forget* them all, and, rapt, to lose
Sense of mortality ; awhile to rise
Into sublimer being—as the dews
'Twixt Earth and Heaven, gaining dim surmise
Of what, unflesh'd, we may be ; this endues
Man like a god—this dost *thou* realize.

Joseph Hunter,

KEEPER OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS.

STUDENT for love, a quiet-thoughted man,
Thine is it, HUNTER, to live lustrous hours
Of gentle brooding o'er the Muses' dowers,
And, humbly erudite, the text to scan ;
Rapt with immortal memories, holier than
All the tame Present issues and devours,
Thy spirit haunteth the Elysian bowers
Among the minds which, ages gone, began :
From doubt rest sacred thine hypotheses !
An honest will is all this world may own ;
But in that life, where Truth hath no degrees,
Thou'lt prove the dear conjectures thou hast known,
And see them clear, with mightier mysteries,
Each to its shape immutable ygrown.

T. J. Judkin.

JUDKIN of simple heart, who, in one name,
Joins pastor, poet, painter—in one age
Blends the seven ages, or a Child, or Sage,
As mood may vary ; how, anon, shall Fame
Reward thee, or thy worthy works proclaim ?
Will she thy sermons vaunt, of holy rage
And voice of stentor ? or thy metred page
Of Hymn or Sonnet ? or thy pencil's aim,
To reproduce the grace the poet sees ?
(The picture of *his* mind to other's eye.)
What matters ! if in each a man doth well,
Whether he sought by rivers, rocks and trees,
Or by the word of truth he could out-tell,
Or poet's song, God's name to magnify ?

Edward Lumley.

PERFECT exemplar of the London man,
True Cockney, and true Englishman withal,
A Christian too, we may thee justly call,
Albeit devoted worshipper of Pan.
Double-lived LUMLEY ! 'plaining of the ban
Of street-incarceration, whilst the thrall
Upon thy body cramps thee not at all,
Nor narrows thy thought's compass by a span.
Duty claims sacrifice ; yet thy full soul,
Nurtured in hopes and high imaginings,
No portion loseth of its earthly joy,
Strayeth, 'mid prairies green, from pole to pole,
And, scaling Heaven with cherubic wings,
Feeds on delights unreal, which do not cloy.

To Sir Robert Peel,

AFTER HIS SPEECH ON FREE-TRADE IN CORN,

22D JAN. 1846.

Now seeth the world a high-exampled good,—
Power confessing error ; onward, PEEL !
Blush not thou if humanity reveal
Its *native* weakness, (which to have withstood
Were vice beginning ;) let no specious hood
Be Truth's obscurer ; ever when we kneel,
Greatest we are ; who to the right is leal,
Guidance divine hath in Thought's mazy wood.
Honour to him, distinguish'd by no deed
Which stemm'd the flowing of progression's tide
To vaunt him on the eddy ; who did heed
'The voice of God,'¹ beyond delusive pride,
And all learnt wisdom. He shall have his meed,
Though glib debaters of a day deride.

¹ Vox populi, etc.

Benjamin Disraeli,

EARL OF BEACONSFIELD.

TOLD by a name that tells the ear his Race,
Alien, yet Englishman, of learned Sire,
He, dauntless, braved the contest, to be higher,
And noble, among Nobles took his place,—
Nature's Patrician, with patrician grace.
Great souls are unperturb'd, betray not ire ;
Ah, reck'd they little of the latent fire,
When searching, eager-eyed, his statue-face ;
Till the Volcano flamed, and then they knew
How passion curb'd is strength to strength upon,—
In flashing forces or of Tongue or Pen,—
The weapons keen wherewith his foes he slew.
He scaled Parnassus, if not Helicon,
And, born inglorious, died—a ' King of Men.'

May 1881.

George Long.

As the hard Miser doth, he makes a store
Of various mintage—from each learned tongue !
Of all the wisdom that is said or sung,
So none can count, or guess, his wealth—of lore ;
And, like the Miser, doth he fret and pore,
Yet, as he groweth old,—as ever young !
Delving the Mine wherefrom his riches sprung,
His greed insatiate—crying more, more, more !
Unlike the Miser, he will freely yield
From all he hath, with no begrudging dole,
And still will render from the fruitful field
Wherever knowledge thrives—from pole to pole,
Till men may wonder at the hoard conceal'd ;—
Ah, we but gain an atom of the whole !

Delirant Reges.¹

‘—ad hæc se
Romanus Graiusque ac barbarus induperator
Erexit.’—JUVENAL, X. 137.

HAIL! victor Emperor; thou, once a King,
 Would'st be uplifted to transcendent state,
 Dare to impersonate the part of Fate,
 And on thy foe humiliation bring.
 And Nemesis hath heard thee pray and sing,
 And given thee glory that doth ante-date
 A glory ending in unending hate—
 In tales of woe that shall through ages ring.
 Pitiless exercise of garner'd power,—
 To harry helpless creatures here and there!
 Robbery made righteous by the rules of war,
 And death to all who did not basely cower!
 Homesteads afire,—fear, famine and despair!
 Such was the cost,—and thou art Emperor.

March 1871.

¹ ‘*Quidquid delirant reges plectuntur Achivi.*’

HOR. *Epp.* i. 2. 14.

Benigna.

O LOVELY lady, of the radiant mien,
Thine aspect is a book of gentle joy,
A sweet-toned happiness, without alloy,
A lake of waters clear in placid sheen.
It seemeth to me that, like Nature's Queen,
Thou dost an holy influence employ,
The haughty quelling, comforting the coy,
And making all things, with thyself, serene.
Ah ! surely, in thine angel-face we see,
Unfaded, the Divine similitude ;
Just as in Eve, ere of the fatal tree
She tasted,—erewhen Evil's darksome brood
Had, in the ceaseless struggle, sinfully,
Displaced the lineaments with fingers rude.

Tones to the Absent.¹

MARY, mistrust not ; wake the charmed tone,
Strike! strike the chords that are too sweet for vexing;
Let thine Attendant-Spirit, else unknown,
Speak with the voice whose stillness is perplexing ;
Dread not the absence of the ears that were,
Open that heart which will not bear confining,
And there shall issue forth a holy prayer
Of heavenly music, with thy thoughts combining ;
More true than words, or wail of mortal breath,
Were Music for thy sorrow's full expression,
For it is abler to discourse with Death,
Than any language in the world's possession ;
Court then, O love ! the speech which no words
 needeth,
The subtile tongue, whose hest the Unseen heedeth !

¹ To a young lady who avoided music after the death of her Father.

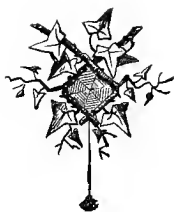
Now and Then.¹

So, lady, in the haven of thy will,
Meeting dear sacrifice with calm contentment,
Dost thou thine earthly destiny fulfil,
Thyself bereaving 'gainst thy heart's assentment.
Unto the Future art thou hence allied
By her, in grace and good, from thee proceeding,
And though the present fade, all rainbow-dyed
'Twill hold a blissful charm in its receding.
From the mind-treasures of the joyant years,
Fancy will reproduce thine own sweet springing,
E'en that thou scarce shalt ken, 'twixt smiles and tears,
If then, or now, the merry bells are ringing ;
But, as the sun another clime adorning,
Merge into one, the evening and the morning.

¹ At the marriage of the only child of a dying widow.

Experientia Docet.

One said, 'Tis well when life hath early end,
To die ere yet the Soul has ta'en the taint
Of sordid commerce, guileful, base restraint,
For gain to truckle, and for place to bend ;
Erewhile ingratitude had shamed a friend,
Or broken love had made the heart to faint ;
Erewhile that doubt had whisper'd its complaint,
Or hope, declining, could no more contend.'
Oh ! foolish Monitor, oh ! rash desire,—
Doth not the furnace prove the metal true ?
Hath virtue worth that hath no test withstood ?
Were it not better to outlive the fire,
To profit by the gainings that accrue,
And die, at latest, when more wise and good ?



THE DIRGE OF MAN.



The Dirge of Man.

WE live to learn, and learn to live,
We know, nor longer guess and try ;
Our knowledge henceforth we outgive—
But we must die.

We see, and now can rightly see,
No more deluded by the eye ;
Sight ! thou henceforth our guide couldst be—
But we must die.

We hear, and separate word from wit,
Nor take for truth what is a lie ;
Ear ! be henceforth our counsel fit—
Ah ! we must die.

TIME, we did treat thee with disdain,
And let the hours, unnoted, fly ;
Now prize thee we, O Time, in vain !
For we must die.

SPRING, thy ecstatic influence,
Of life renews, we care not why,
The juvenescent soul and sense—
But we must die.

SUMMER, thy genial, sunny hours
Returning, still the past outvie,
And brighter, brighter, bloom thy flowers !
But we must die.

AUTUMN, thy tints, thy lessening day,
Thy saddening eve, and reddening sky,
Still charm us more the more we stay—
But we must die.

WINTER, thy cold our spirit warms,
Thy rest, our rest doth typify,
And we have grown to love thy storms ;
But we must die.

We know it well, the world we tread,
To wend where'er, or far or nigh,
As others will, when we are dead ;—
And we must die.

Ye verdant plains, ye branching trees
That oft with rapture we descry,
More, and still ever more ye please—
But we must die.

Ye pretty flowers that deck the mead,
And move our hearts to glorify,
More, more do we your beauty heed—
But we must die.

Ye elements that flash and roar,
And, godlike, each to each reply,
More, more we wonder and adore—
But we must die.

O Nature, mother Nature ! thou
Once moved men thee to deify ;
We feel our kindred with thee now—
But we must die.

Dear friends ! we miss'd you when ye fled,
Distress and time did us ally ;
TIME ! thou couldst substitute the dead—
But we must die.

And ye, our loved companions yet,
Whose constancy can Time defy ;
Time doth increasing love beget—
But we must die.

Children beloved ! our hope and care
Since when ye could but laugh and cry ;
Our friends to be !—but elsewhere—
For we must die.

Sweet confidence ! so sweet to know,
Sweet trust, we'll win thee by and by,
And, trusted, sweetlier trust bestow—
But we must die.

Much that we knew not how to love,
Regarding not when it was by,
We covet now all else above—
But we must die.

Oft-seeing some affection brings,
We prize what Time doth ratify,
And grow to love familiar things—
But we must die.

We've labour'd much, our deeds are known,
Perchance our work doth fructify ;
Now might we reap where we have sown—
But we must die.

For thee, O Fame ! we could endure
To be interpreted awry ;
Now are we righted, and secure—
But we must die.

For wealth, the need of polish'd life,
We did, in much, ourselves deny ;
Ease, now, succeeds the money-strife—
But we must die.

Sweet the appliances of wealth,
When life is fresh, and hope is spry ;
Of sickly zest in ageing health—
And we must die.

The talents in us, little prized
Whilst with our compeers we would vie,
If late, the world hath recognised—
But we must die.

Honours are ours and high estate,
Our name men now much magnify ;
Is it in scorn they make us great,
When we must die ?

O Reputation ! canst thou not
Our joy and strength revivify ?
Or, lagging long, thou hadst forgot
That we must die.

Experience, trial, habitude,
Tend much our lives to simplify ;
We have, by use, the world subdued—
But we must die.

Now, apt in all that skill may test,
Or if we wits or fingers ply,
We joy that skill to manifest—
But we must die.

Intricate, difficult, abstruse,—
These yearly less to us apply ;
Practice should henceforth prosper use—
But we must die.

Some fond idea, whereto we've wrought
Through weary years with many a sigh,
Is, now, to full fruition brought—
But we must die.

Lost opportunity we grieve,
Late noting what hath passéd by ;
May we not now the lost retrieve ?
No, we must die.

Acts have we done, when lacking light,
Resulting much to mortify ;
Henceforth they shall be done aright !
No, we must die.

In outward things what first appears
We scan, compare, and rectify ;
Then taste the beautiful endears—
When we must die.

Loved knowledge ! ours by sweat of brain,
It seems that thou art ours for aye ;
Poor tree ! will not thy fruit remain,
Though thou must die ?

Pile truth on truth, from age to age,
Let knowledge mount from high to high ;
Oh, then, we might indeed be sage !
But we must die.

Alas ! to each, alone, has worth,
Experience that life must buy—
Small part whereof we leave on earth,
When we must die.

Wisdom may come, not lightly given,
And, hard to gain, elusive, shy,
Is won by those who well have striven,—
When they must die.

Philosophy hath vistas fair,
Wherethrough new wonders we espy ;
To us their sequence is despair—
For we must die.

O Fount of language, springing new,
Whence comes thine affluent supply ?
Is, then, thy source exhausted too
When we must die ?

Why, why, O Tongue, thy wealth of words,
The viewless Soul to signify?
Is thine the mission of the birds,
That sing, and die?

Memory—the long, instructive past,
Hath made thee Reason's best ally,
And, now, a treasury rich and vast!
But we must die.

Ye trackless subtleties of thought,
That dare beyond our world to pry,—
Your striving shall not be for nought!
Though that we die.

From whence ye came, thereto ye flow,—
The Me, divest' of mortal tie;—
The very Self we best shall know,
Though that we die.

Oh, highest Thought! Oh, impulse true,
That dost the highest thought imply;
Our Father God—and life anew,
Though that we die.

Our Father God! enough to think,—
Enough all thought to satisfy,
And mortal to immortal link,
Though that we die.

Our Father, God, Whom not to know
Doth all our holiest hopes belie,
Whom, fain to know, from Earth we go,
Content to die!

O Thou most Wise, the single Good !
Thy Work may not Thy work decry ;
For all, we owe Thee gratitude,
Most, when we die.



THE TERCENTENARY.

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON,

23d April 1864.



The Tercentenary.

A FESTAL SONG.

I.

JUST three centuries ago
Was our gentle Shakespeare born,
And we hail his natal morn.

Shall we then forbear to sing
What the centuries do bring?
Shall we, thanklessly, forget
An accumulated debt?
Rather let us all confess
Our unsumm'd indebtedness,
Let us turn from work to play,
And in joy keep holiday :

For, three centuries ago
Was our gentle Shakespeare born,
And we hail his natal morn.

Cometh Spring for hope and mirth,
In the Spring exulteth Earth,
Spring gives all the world is worth,
Jocund Spring gave Shakespeare birth !

With his primal, purest ray,
Phœbus beam'd upon the day ;
Then in glory forth he came,
Putting lesser lights to shame,
Like our Shakespeare by his fame.
Avon's banks are greenest green,
Avon smiles in silver sheen ;
Stratford town this day is glad,
Streets in boughs and banners clad ;
Hour of mortal waking brings
Sights and sounds of joyful things ;
All people drest
In gayest best,
The church-bells ring,
Lads and lasses sing,
The birds are carolling—
Earth is blest !

For, three centuries ago
Was our gentle Shakespeare born,
And we hail his natal morn.

II.

Now, muster'd in the Civic Hall,
The votaries obey the call
Of FLOWER, Mayor of Stratford hight,
Stalwart, portly man of might,
FLOWER, of ample beard white :

Round him and CARLISLE they gather—
Mayor and President together ;

THE TERCENTENARY.

CARLISLE, him Green Erin's king,¹
Poet-love doth hither bring,—
CARLISLE, who himself doth sing ;
Round him throng the devotees,
Marking Shakespeare's effigies ;
Round him lovingly they press,
They whom Sympathy doth bless ;
FLOWER lifts his stentor voice,
' All be welcome ! all rejoice !
Lo ! our revels are begun,
Let us forth to feast and fun.'

Shade of Shakespeare.

I am here, I am here
In æther sphere,
As æther clear ;
I am near you,
See you, hear you ;
Me you not espy,
But I am all eye ;
Me you not hear,
But I am all ear ;
And though you not hear
Through the way of the ear,
I am whisp'ring to you,
Passing through you ;
Everywhere
I am there !

¹ The Earl of Carlisle, then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland

III.

Now the soul of Stratford smiles,
Shakespeare now the hour beguiles.
Ring out merrily, merrily chime,
Bells that rang in Shakespeare's time ;
Ring out merrily, jubilant ring,
Bells that did to Shakespeare sing ;
Ring out, bells, and ringing tell—
' Here the bones of Shakespeare dwell :'
Ding dong ding, and dong ding dong,
So to Shakespeare was your song.
Deck'd with medal and rosette,
 Not unwillingly display'd,
Every man doth care forget,
 Every matron, every maid,
Walks in love with Shakespeare's shade.
To the foremost favour'd spot
Where our Shakespeare was begot ;
Where, when Nature him had won,
She bestow'd her darling son ;—
To the little chamber, blest
More than palace golden-drest ;
To the school-room, where he caught
More of knowledge than was taught ;
To the precinct let us hie
Where he dwelt, where he did die ;
To the church, where prayer he said,
Where he now lies buried ;
To bright Avon's grassy banks,
Conscious of his boyish pranks ;
Tread the sward his foot hath prest,
Green, as it his tread confest !

By the same stream
That on him did gleam ;
In whose cool wave
He oft did lave ;
Whose glassy face
His form did trace,—
O river ! we implore
That reflex us restore !
To the meadows' chequer'd shade,
Where he ponder'd, where he play'd ;
List to Philomela, sprung
From the quire that to him sung ;
Then unto the streets agen,
Where he took his note of men.

IV.

Ho ! to the banquet, in a tent
Raised for this high tournament ;
Grandly circled, and array'd
With the proverbs Shakespeare said,—
Through the roof the sunbeams streaming,
 Glancing, glancing here and there,
As their presence was beseeming,
 Gleaming, dancing through the air ;
Ranged at tables gaily set,
Pilgrims nigh eight hundred met,—
Ladies fair, and men of thought,
In one love together brought.
Shall they not, in genial mind,
Bless the blesser of their kind ?
Shall they not, in Shakespeare's vein,
Loving cups to Shakespeare drain ?

CARLISLE, leader of the feast,
He, the festival's high priest,
Has the duty to proclaim
Homage unto Shakespeare's name.—
For, three centuries ago
Was our gentle Shakespeare born,
And we hail his natal morn.

As a poet well may prate
Of a poet much more great,
CARLISLE spake, and, full of glee,
Shout the merrie companie,
'*Shakespeare's honour'd memorie !*'
Yet a shout ! and, in the clang,
'Avon's bard' the minstrels sang.

Shade of Shakespeare.

I am near you,
Near you,
See you, hear you ;
I have been at a feast,
Nor last nor least :
I forget not,
I regret not !
Drink I not, and yet I drink
In a way you do not think ;
Eat I not, and yet I eat
What is better than your meat.
Taste your viands, sip your wine,
All you do this hour is mine ;
In your cup my spirit enters,
In each soul my spirit centres ;

All you drink, and all you eat,
With my sympathy complete.

FLOWER told of greeting sent
From the German continent ;
From far Moscow's domes and spires
Through the telegraphic wires.
HOUGHTON for the poets spake,—
For his own and brothers' sake :
CRESWICK signalized the fame
Of his great fore-runner's name.
Sound the trumpet ! minstrels sing,
' Hail the Thespian poet-king !'
From the dais CARLISLE sped,
And the votaries followéd.

Under Cynthja's smile they rambled,
At the Pyrotechny scrambled,
Saw that rocket and balloon,
Minish'd quicker than the Moon ;
Rambled, yielding to the whim,
' Here the moon so shined on him ;—
Soothes *his* spirit, too, the light
Us doth tranquillize to-night ?'

v.

'Tis the Sabbath : fair the day ;
Now we shall with Shakespeare pray.
To the church the votaries speed,
Space the Gothic fane doth need.
TRENCH, the critic-bishop, rises,
Gives a sermon of surprises ;

For he took their hearts along
Less with sermon than with song ;
More than sermon them to tell
All that Shakespeare had done well ;
And to picture what we owe,
In our joy or in our woe,
Shed throughout our mortal span,
To the poet-friend of man.
Near those hallow'd reliques standing,
Tone and attitude commanding,
Well the Preacher then doth preach,
Much to charm and much to teach.

Shade of Shakespeare.

I am the air
Of this House of Prayer ;
You have well said,
I am comforted.
I bless you,
Enfold you, caress you.
Sweet to me the praise
Touching my mortal days ;
For my light, now so bright,
Blinks not my sight
To my earth-born darkness ;
I am well bestead
To be so interpreted ;
I left you my best,
You hold the bequest,
In your love I have rest.



Now to Avon's banks away,
Where was Shakespeare wont to stray ;
Or, in smoothly gliding boat,
Floating where our Bard would float ;
Fancying, as we gently row,
We with him a-fishing go ;
Or to grassy pathways yonder,
Where on Sunday he would wander,
Pacing on with quiet feet,
Lost in contemplation sweet.

'Swan of Avon.'

Die I never, never I,
Whilst my Shakespeare doth not die ;
Die I never, never I,
For my Shakespeare will not die ;
Sing I ever, ever sing,
Whilst my Shakespeare's voice doth ring ;
Live I ever, dying live,
Whilst my Shakespeare's name doth live ;
Sing I ever, ceasing not
Till his singing be forgot.

VI.

Every day the sun doth shine,
Every day we garlands twine,
Garlands made with flowers of spring,
Flowers that Shakespeare caused to sing.
Every day we yoke with fun,
Frisk and gambol in the sun ;
Burthen us no sorrow shall,
For 'tis Shakespeare's festival !

Ho ! to Shottery by the path
Shakespeare's foot oft trodden hath,
When he would a-courting go,
Stepping neither weak nor slow.
See the house where she did dwell
Whom our Shakespeare held in spell ;
See the house where she was born
Past three centuries ago ;
Then, o'er grassy uplands, on
To the hill of Luddington ;
See the spot where, it is said,
Shakespeare did his first love wed ;—
(Aye with Shakespeare briskly walking,
Aye with Shakespeare inly talking,)
Over Avon, where he went,
Following where his footsteps bent ;
Thorough meadows, green and still,
By the river-side, until
We re-enter by the Mill ;
Pass the Church where Shakespeare lies,
So fulfil our sympathies.

Then to Charlecote, whence, they say,
Shakespeare helped the deer away ;
Scenes that Shakespeare saw, survey.



Now the great Pavilion throng,
Listen to our Shakespeare's song ;
Songs of sad or merry note,
Chaunted by a lithesome throat ;

Songs that tell the inmost mind,
And the complex thought unwind ;
Songs almost of soul a part,
Songs, the music of *his* heart.

Shade of Shakespeare.

I am here in the throng,
I know my song ;
Your singing list—
Ye Zephyrs, whist !
Sing, sing,
The time is spring,
Sing, sing, ever sing ;
Sing as I sung,
Old or young ;
Sing when you can,
Boy or man,
That was my plan ;
Sing, ever sing,
Mother or maid,
Be not afraid.

VII.

Every day the sun doth shine,
Every day we garlands twine,
Garlands made with flowers of spring,
Flowers that Shakespeare caused to sing.
Gay all earth, and gay the sky,
Leaping fish, and birds that fly ;
Gay the hill-side, gay the glade,
Gay in light that doth not fade ;
Never open'd days more bright,
Match'd with splendours of the night.

Heart in hand the votaries meet,
Unrefrain'd, the votaries greet,
Tread the earth with lightsome feet,
On the mead, or in the street ;
Note the sky, the birds, the flowers,
Cheerly court the frolic Hours.
Then at eve, more blithe than sage,
Gather them before the stage ;
On their Poet's visions dote,
Realize what Shakespeare wrote.
See his Juliet, Viola,
Rosalind, Olivia,
See the pictures of *his* brain,
See *him* half on Earth again.

Shade of Shakespeare.

I am here, I am here,
In æther sphere,
As æther clear ;
I am near you,
See you, hear you ;
These were my loves,—
I have left you my loves,
For ever my loves ;
Seek, you will find them,—
Lovingly bind them ;
Earth's gifts and graces,
Sweet faces,
And pleasant places,
Delights more high
That search the sky,—
Though they pass away,
Be not vext,

Give Fancy sway !
They are types of the next.
I have left you my joy,
Look above and around,
There is more to be found
Time doth not destroy.
I have left you my care,
Oh ! of it beware ;
I look'd high and guess'd,
So do you your best.
Old loves are yet mine
In the region divine ;
Æschylus, Euripides,
Homer strong, and Sophocles,
Plautus, Aristophanes ;
Best of the chosen few,
I dear old Plutarch knew,
And my debt to him confest ;
Nor sought in vain
Cervantes, Rabelais, Montaigne,
Dante, Tasso, and Petrarch,
Lope de Vega, Calderon,
Spenser, and my rare Ben Jon,
Mad Kit Marlow, and the rest.
Strive, that, when from mortals free,
With the greatest you may be.

VIII.

Lo, the longest day hath end,
Every friend must part from friend ;—
Still high up the Sun doth shine,
Yet we know he must decline.

Votaries at Shakespeare's shrine,
Knit in sympathy divine,—
'Tis the tyranny of Fate
To dissolve and separate !
But, before we part, we shall
Meet at this great Festival,
Clad as Shakespeare's folk were clad,
And, albeit a little mad,
Fancy, 'mid the mazy dance,
Shakespeare's comely countenance.
Make the ball-room blaze, sublime
With symbols of the olden time ;
Deck the room with emblems round,
As where Shakespeare should be found ;
Don slash'd doublet, ruff and hose,
Camisole with lace and bows,
And a hat that Shakespeare knows.
Lasses, well your tresses trim,
Lace the silken bodice slim,
Look as you'd be loved by him !
Let the minstrels not forget
Jig, cotillion, minuet.
In the time of good Queen Bess
Men were merry none the less :
Let the hour of parting be
In Shakespearean jollitie.
So, in after-time, we'll say,
We did re-create his day !



Shade of Shakespeare.

It is well done,
I relish your fun ;
Your crew I'm among,
Your hands by me wrung ;—
To me Time is past,
The first is as last ;
But I love you, I love you,
O sisters and brothers,
I love you all well,
As I have loved others ;
I care for your sorrow, I join in your laughter,
I ken my kith now, and my kin who come after
A century passes, and you pass away,
But I'll be here then, as I am at this day.



ESTO PERPETUUM.



Esto Perpetuum.

If happiness is perfect joy,
And Heaven is true felicitie,
A happy moment Heaven could be,
Evermore.

The little maid's first birthday-feast,
Her little head with chaplet crown'd,
Her little first-loves all around :—
For ever !

The younker, with his younker friend,
A ramble goeth, far away,
Throughout a sweltering summer day :—
For ever !

The schoolboy at the breaking-up,
Pass'd the ordeal, speeches said,
Two prizes gain'd, the classes sped :—
For ever !

The game is cricket, and the scores
Are even—but another run—
The ball is hit—and we have won :—
For ever !

I've heard of fishing, find the pool ;
My heart is burning with one wish,
And now, I grasp a glittering fish :—
For ever !

The girl, almost to woman grown,
Whose beauty might elect her queen,
Hath ne'er, till now, her beauty seen :—
For ever !

The stripling, first his nature conning,
In day-dream, dares the world to scan,
Thinks what it is to be a man !—
For ever !

The demoiselle, of homage tired,
Learns, though she knows not how or when,
She has impress'd the man of men !—
For ever !

Stept out of Academus' shade,
The man beholds his future clear,
And bravely forecasts a career :—
For ever !

A day, its like not born before—
The earth in smiles, the sky in shine—
This world, so beautiful—is mine :—
For ever !

The world is mine, this world of men—
Do they not love me, every one ?
Have loved me since my life begun :—
For ever !

Dear Alma-Mater, hard thy task !
But now, the best condones the worst—
A wrangler, and a double-first :—
For ever !

The years have flown, the fight is fought,
The care and doubt are less and less,
And, from this hour, it is success :—
For ever !

To one I love I tell not love,—
Perchance, I talk with her awhile,
And win a smile beyond a smile :—
For ever !

My love is with me, and I prove
There is no doubting in her love ;
How more than this the gods above ?
For ever !

'Mid meadows green, and summer's sheen,
I track the winding of the brook,
And now and then a trout I hook :—
For ever !

A-wearied in the summer heat,
I stand upon the River's brim ;
A 'header'—and a mighty swim :—
For ever !

Who cometh nigh ? what lovely face,
What form of grace, what eyes divine !
She passeth—but a look is mine :—
For ever !

Ecstatic vision, thou art gone ;
Gone, as the meteor glideth by,
Its splendour leaving in the eye :—
For ever !

My nag is fleet, the sward is soft,
I turn my back on men and towns,
And madly scamper o'er the downs :—
For ever !

The wind is south, well soak'd the soil,
The sky is grey—hark, hark ! the horn ;
This—this, good hap, a hunter's morn :—
For ever !

The hound gives tongue, Fox breaks away,
Away ! o'er mead, or hedge, or stream ;
I claim the 'brush'—in pride supreme :—
For ever !

I've woo'd in vain, and woo again,
This notelet comes to ban or bless ;
I break the seal, the word is 'yes : '—
For ever !

We meet and kiss, and talk, and walk
In winding path and coppice green,
By all, but each by each, unseen :—
For ever !

The time is May, the Earth is new,
And warm, and bright and blossoming,
The soft air stirs, the birdies sing :—
For ever !

How like to life the tale is told !
So true, that fiction it is not
To me, who have all else forgot :—
For ever !

Or, with our Laureate we rejoice,
Till, with his Fancy so at one,
We e'en forget dear Tennyson :—
For ever !

A friend, front *coupé*, train 'express,'
A novel, or the World's Gazette,
A gossip, and a cigarette :—
For ever !

White, graceful hands now strike the chords,
A lithesome throat doth deftly sing,
And I, the loved, am listening :—
For ever !

'Tis calm and warm, the summer night,
And clear the moon, when on the lawn
We linger, linger till the dawn :—
For ever !

Or on a sultry day of June
Beneath the canopy remain,
And listen to the thunder-rain :—
For ever !

Some work is done, some part achieved,
No more to-day but talk and joke,
Serenely rest, serenely smoke :—
For ever !

O hand unfaithful ! in my mind
The very touch is clearly wrought ;
That, *that* is it ! I see my thought :—
For ever !

In intellectual being blent,
With chosen friend I now converse,
And here and there a line rehearse :—
For ever !

The middle row, a central stall,
The zest of youth, the rest of age,
As Hamlet, Fechter, on the stage :—
For ever !

The lake is smooth, the mountains shine,
I steer the skiff amid the isles,
And, at my look, my sweetheart smiles :—
For ever !

A truce to toil, a truce to care ;
Shipp'd are we not for sunny France ?
What do we now but sing and dance :—
For ever !

The music has been in my soul ;
But now that it is made a voice,
Supremely doth my soul rejoice :—
For ever !

To think that men henceforth shall hear
From out the sweet supernal store,
A cadence never heard before :—
For ever !

Now Costa leads, the viol sings,
And every deft device of sound
In perfect synthesis is found :—
For ever !

Her eyes are lustrous, large and full,
Their icy beauty men admire ;
But now, I see them flashing fire :—
For ever !

The mother, first her child caresses,
And first, the thought her life-blood stirs,
That in the world two lives are hers :—
For ever !

Now done it is—a noble deed ;
Prolong'd the toil, 'mid doubt and blame,
But men shall much repeat my name :—
For ever !

The sweet forgetfulness of ease,
A sense that all is good and true,
And nothing in the world to do :—
For ever !

The game is Whist—the friends are four ;—
Old friends, well-loved, of kith and kin ;
All savage—in desire to win :—
For ever !

Where chamois haunts, and glacier gleams,
Stupendous Alp amid, I pause,
More high than Alp, to think the Cause :—
For ever !

I know a truth words cannot prove ;
Come arc and angle, point and line ;
O perfect Reason, it is thine :—
For ever !

Through me, by geometric art,
A thing invisible is shown,
A vital consequence beknown :—
For ever !

Humane philosopher, distress'd
At ills unthinking men endure ;
Propounded hast thou cause and cure :—
For ever !

Or, with abstruse, inductive search,
The Earth's Arcana hast unseal'd,
The hidden mystery reveal'd :—
For ever !

Indulge the beatific thought
That, through the ages yet to be,
Mankind shall own a debt to thee :—
For ever !

Ingenious mechanician, thou
Hast well the combination sought,
And iron now performs thy thought :—
For ever !

Thou know'st that by thy shrewd device,
Some hurtful toil in filth and pain
Will ne'er be done by hands again :—
For ever !

The analyst a solvent needeth,
Nor from his craving knoweth rest ;
'Tis found—'tis found ! the only test :—
For ever !

Rapt poet ! vext by subtle thought,
With urgent throes thy thought hath birth
A new creation on the earth :—
For ever !

Astronomer, despair not yet,
The star *is* there, compute again ;
Now look, and this time not in vain :—
For ever !

The long-continued effort closes ;
My Book is nearing to the end,
And now, the final word is penn'd :—
For ever !

At ease reclined, in waking dream,
For overwork by rest atoning,
No neighbour but the wind amoaning :—
For ever !

The air is fresh, the day is young ;
This day I act my long desire ;
Who tells of toil, who talks of tire :—
For ever !

Of feeble breath, withouten hope,
The weary weeks have pass'd in pain,
'Tis o'er—'tis o'er ! I live again :—
For ever !

Fatigue and peril press too long,
The fruits of toil with us will die ;
Ho ! to the rescue ! hear, they cry :—
For ever !

Now, past the danger and the dread,
I breathe again unabated breath,
And say, ' No more I dance with Death : '—
For ever !

I loved onetime ; that love is dead ;
Since then I've striven the sordid strife ;
Again I love, am loved—new life :—
For ever !

On foreign land, perchance in Spain,
I ride and rove amid the wild,
And freshen, freshen as a child :—
For ever !

This pain doth stultify my mind !
And will, with mind, itself destroy,
Hush—it hath ceased ! new-born is joy :—
For ever !

Oh, anguish ! and oh, deeper grief ;
Why life and health, 'mid cloud and care ?
Outshines the sun, my sky is fair :—
For ever !

Cathedral dome beneath, I list,
The Anthem riseth to the skies ;
And all the mortal in me dies :—
For ever !

Far, far from land, the ship rides well ;
I view the restless, shoreless sea,
At one with that infinitie :—

For ever !

How still the night ! the stars are bright,
They see me with their myriad eyes,
And to their gaze my soul replies :—

For ever !

The world forgot, my spirit clear,
From mazes free of doubt and strife,
I live a new, unbounded life :—

For ever !

The past into the future passes,
And all experience I see
Resolved in the eternal Me :—

For ever !

Dissolved in prayer, in rapture lost,
I know no speech of thought or word,
And yet I know my prayer is heard :—

For ever !

A joy there is above all joy,
A thought beyond all thinking known,
The thought—to be with God alone—

Evermore !





A CANTICLE.



Æ Canticle.

UNTO God, the all-pervading, Whence we came, in Whom
we live,—

Men, for aye your voices raise

Unto God, in songs of praise !

Unto God, Whose gifts are boundless, let us give all we
can give.

Of unconscious earth made conscious, conscious earth of
God aware ;—

Men, for aye your voices raise

Unto God, in songs of praise !

Knowing God, shall we unknow Him for a moment out
of prayer ?

Sole indued with admiration, sole conceptive of applause,—

Men, for aye your voices raise

Unto God, in songs of praise !

Sole, on Earth enraptured gazing, more enraptured of the
Cause.

Witness, diverse shell refulgent, glistening crystal, ore, and
gem,—

Men, for aye your voices raise

Unto God, in songs of praise !

Witness, egg of bird or insect, and the germen in the stem.

Witness, living things quiescent, varied flower, and herb,
and tree,—

Men, for aye your voices raise

Unto God, in songs of praise !

Witness, zoophytes, perceptive though they neither hear
nor see.

Witness, ye ephemera, lasting the duration of a breath,—

Men, for aye your voices raise

Unto God, in songs of praise !

Witness, parasite, and fungus springing beautiful from
death.

Witness, animated creatures, of the water, land, or air,—

Men, for aye your voices raise

Unto God, in songs of praise !

Witness, complex works that, working, silently their God
declare.

Witness, myriad modes of instinct new in beings number-
less,—

Men, for aye your voices raise

Unto God, in songs of praise !

Witness, each existence order'd a superior life to bless.

Witness well, ye orbs of glory ! balanced by a mighty
spell,—

Men, for aye your voices raise

Unto God, in songs of praise !

Witness, meteors and comets, forces that their course
compel.

Witness, principles of Nature, laws that winds and seas
control,—

Men, for aye your voices raise

Unto God, in songs of praise !

Witness, mysteries electric, and the needle to the pole.

Witness, verities of Science, lighting to the vast unfound,—

Men, for aye your voices raise

Unto God, in songs of praise !

Witness, philosophic visions unexpress'd by verbal sound.

Witness, godlike power of Reason, scanning the sublunar
scene,—

Men, for aye your voices raise

Unto God, in songs of praise !

Witness, higher reason, rising to the proof of the unseen.

Witness, habitudes unreason'd, tending always to the best,—

Men, for aye your voices raise

Unto God, in songs of praise !

Witness, human heart confessing more than reason has
confest.

Witness, Fancy daring farther than the farthest planets roll,—

Men, for aye your voices raise

Unto God, in songs of praise !

Witness, inspiration prompted through the whispers of the
soul.

Witness, awful voice of Conscience—voice at war with
mortal sin,—

Men, for aye your voices raise

Unto God, in songs of praise !

Witness, God in man residing—making man with Angels
kin.

Witness, Mind of Man revolving of the future and the past,—
Men, for aye your voices raise
Unto God, in songs of praise !
Witness, Man, the God-perceiving, seeking to the first and
last.

Witness, Providence prevailing omnipresent though unsought,—
Men, for aye your voices raise
Unto God, in songs of praise !
Witness, God's unmeasured goodness—mercy passing
human thought !



MEDITATION.



Alpha—Omega.

THE urchin, elated at feeling his feet in the dame-school,
Ingrate, looks back, with the firstling of scorn, to the
Nursery—

‘Its trumpery toys, its infantine triflings,’—

The germ of the sad thought,—that Earth-life is nothing
ness !

Next the mannikin schoolboy struts in defiant pretension ;
Ignores, with half-shame, the late-enjoy’d games of the
dame-school—

‘Those childish pranks ! those paltry simplicities !’—

Begetting the sad thought,—that Earth-life is nothingness !

Then the brave adolescent, unconscious as yet of
ambition,

Disdains the athletic amusements—a year gone his life-
joy ;—

‘Mere sports ! unproductive of glory or lucre ;’—

Begetting the sad thought,—that Earth-life is nothingness !

He is man now—and, in his strength, goeth forth to his
purpose ;

Essays, and achieves, and with rapture possesses the
guerdon,—

Contemning the prize he hath yearn'd for, and fought
for,—
Begetting the sad thought,—that Earth-life is nothingness!

He has loved;—a true love—a phrensy that knew no
confining;
This the sum of all hope,—to have won the true-love of
his mistress;—
Won also the insight of loving more wisely;—
Begetting the sad thought,—that Earth-life is nothingness!

Oh, for learning! he ponders, full-puff'd with the pride of
the pedant;
To-day's blush but faintly atoning for yesterday's rash-
ness,—
'Time lost! in acquiring some fruitlings of error,'—
Begetting the sad thought,—that Earth-life is nothingness!

And now hath he learnt, and his knowledge has mounted
to wisdom;
O Wisdom miscall'd, if thou too must soon be ex-
ceeded!—
The Mind's superessence attainted as folly!
Begetting the sad thought,—that Earth-life is nothingness!

Again, and again, and again for the goal that is furthest;
Again, and again, to perceive that the foregone is worth-
less,—
Again to the stretch, for the loftier and nobler,—
Begetting the sad thought,—that Earth-life is nothingness!

Then a STAR rose to him,—and he saw with a far-sighted vision :

He said,—‘ In Life that cometh, is transcendency final ;

This world as a dream, awaked from and over ;—

I shall see thence, exalted,—that the Earth-life is—
Nothingness !’



Forgotten.

GLIMMER of the light of Heaven,
Inklings of the life of angels,
Voices reaching me though heard not,—
Forgotten !

Grateful sentiments engender'd,
Priceless favours unrequited,
Native impulses to virtue,—
Forgotten !

Thoughts of fire, that flash'd and faded,
Clear and infinite perceptions,
Fitful visitings of genius,—
Forgotten !

High resolve and passionate purpose,
Schemes that unto Fame were tending,
Haply marr'd by false ambition?—
Forgotten !

Loves that grew without incitement,
Loves that glow'd of flame the whitest,
Loves of sympathy sincerest,—
Forgotten !

Loves of places, things, and persons,
Loves made loves in love unconscious,
Real loves, though unresponsive,—
Forgotten !

Friendships genial, spontaneous,
Softer friendships, more than friendships,
Friendships true, though uncontinued,—
Forgotten !

Ah ! the years of seeing, hearing,
Thinking, reading, storing knowledge
Gladly found and fondly treasured,—
Forgotten !

Incidents of signal import,
Strange events of poignant pathos,
Synchronisms that moved to wonder,—
Forgotten !

Gifts of God ! outreaching reason ;
Gifts exceeding mundane value ;
Gifts we knew not how to ask for ;—
Forgotten !

Gifts, not less by mere denial ;
Gifts of guidance forth from danger ;
Gracious gifts of blest prevention ;—
Forgotten !

Dire unreason and delusion,
Keen chagrins, the futile offspring,
Errors that have work'd for evil,—
Forgotten !

Much is gone, but more remaineth ;
Who can tell what Memory holdeth ?
Will they be—the myriad memories
Hid in that mysterious storehouse—
Forgotten ?

No More.

O FRESHNESS and newness of all in this earth-world,
O simple contentment, acceptance undoubting,
O future unending, and sweet without bitter,—
No more !

The world was for *me*, in its beauty and grandeur,
The beings I loved were for *me*—a charm'd circle,
All places and things had endurance eternal,—
No more !

O dreams of perfection, in waking or sleeping,
O pure admiration that knew no abridgment,
Perfection of hope, in a hope seeming perfect,—
No more !

O faith that was in me, a faith yet unshaken,
A faith in all promise, a faith in pretension,
A faith in the rightness of all things existent,—
No more !

Sweet Truth ! with no stain on her heaven-born whiteness
Sweet Trust ! resting calm as the sleep of the babies,
Devotion unstinted, and boundless as æther,—
No more !

O warmth of the heart that had never known chilling,
O impulse forth-springing, the cost never counting,
Emotion that well'd as a river of gladness,—
No more !

O joy of the thoughts I believed to be primal,
O joy of invention that none had preceded,
O joy of observing what none had erst noted,—
No more !

Wild wonder that came to me daily and nightly,
Holy awe, unobservant of cause or conclusion,
And dread, with no fearing, in glimpses supernal,—
No more !

O zeal, as the flame that to heaven ascendeth,
Desire for all goodness,—expedience unknowing,
O sentiment, glowing untold and unmeted,—
No more !

The zest of the spirit, the zest of the senses,
Each sight and vibration a new-born enchantment,
Enjoyment that came from the fountains of Nature, —
No more !

O charm of the vision, and charm of the hearing,
O pride of the soul, quick in mental perception,
O marvel of life in a life full of marvels,—
No more !

O dreams out of Earth, in the region of Fancy,
O fancy ecstatic, that soar'd as the angels,
O life out of life, in a life beatific,—
No more !

Ye error, delusion, or bootless expectancy,
Thou base discontent, eldest born of unreason,
Thou fatuous conceit of a self proved so feeble :—
No more !

Dead to Me.

IN my youth I went a-roving,
Roving on beyond the oceans,
Men and things I saw, rejoicing,
Many marvels—unforgotten !

Dead to me.

What a man was he I dwelt with
In a city of Achaia !
Great in virtue and in knowledge,
Still I love him—for he liveth ;—

Dead to me.

Oh ! the learned disputations,
Oh ! the subtleties expounded,
And I doubt not that he speaketh
Ever with enlarging wisdom ;—

Dead to me.

Wondrous scene ! amid the Andes,
Mountain over mountain towering,—
And the terror of volcanoes,—
Fire, and frost, and heaven commingled ;—

Dead to me.

Fertile plains and shining rivers,
Flowing on in sacred silence,
Flowers and birds of gorgeous colours,
Regions of primeval nature ;—

Dead to me.

Pleasant cities ! where I rested
Till their novelty grew home-like,—
Mosque, and Temple, and Cathedral,
That have been, and are for ages ;—
Dead to me.

And the people of those cities,
For a while my social circle,
Or philosophers, or poets,
Graceful ladies all-accomplish'd ;—
Dead to me,

Ah ! the one of my election,
Moving with a queenly grandeur,
Smiling with a smile that blesseth ;
And she still is smiling, blessing ;—
Dead to me.

So, I ponder, will the earth-gods
To me on and on be dying,
Whilst I live in thoughts unceasing,
And increasing, till they all are
Dead to me.



My Motto.

THOUGH thou art on the ground,
With things of baseness found,
Be not to baseness bound,—
Look up.

The lowly may be high,
And loftiest be nigh,
And thou canst see the sky,—
Look up.

Hast thou some work to do,
And canst, with false or true,
Or low, or high, endue,—
Look up.

Hast thou thy place to take,
And wouldst some merit make,
For self and others' sake,—
Look up.

If, as a latent fire,
Prevails some strong desire,
And well thou dost aspire,—
Look up.

If much with cares perplex,
'Mid complications vex,
Thou doubttest of the next,—
Look up.

If, having open choice,
Thou hearest honour's voice,
And after, wouldst rejoice,—
Look up.

In disappointment crost,
Thou hast essay'd and lost,
And tremblest at the cost?—
Look up.

Exists the world in joy,
That knoweth none alloy?
Lest thou the charm destroy,—
Look up.

All dark the world appears,
Thou art depress'd with fears,
And fails thy heart to tears?—
Look up.

They say that Truth's a flam,
Honour, a mere whim-wham,
And Honesty, a sham?—
Look up.

Art thou both mean and grand,
Thy life seems darkly plann'd,
And hard to understand?—
Look up.



The Shadow of the Tomb.

WHAT is this which cometh o'er me,
Makes me so suspend my breath,
And begin to think of death?
 'Tis the shadow of the tomb.

Why so caring and comparing?
Why doth thought, through memory ranging,
Moralize, the world is changing?
 'Tis the shadow of the tomb.

Chosen friends ! I think, where are ye ?
Whither doth such thinking tend ?
That I too shall have an end ;—
 'Tis the shadow of the tomb.

So do all things have an ending !
Folly ! thus thy heart annoying
With things made for thy enjoying ;—
 'Tis the shadow of the tomb.

Knowledge, I have loved thee dearly ;
How this heresy of thought,—
Knowledge tendeth unto nought ?
 'Tis the shadow of the tomb.

No ! it tendeth unto wisdom :
Yet, when faculties are failing,
Wisdom will be unavailing !
 'Tis the shadow of the tomb.

Or, if Wisdom cometh truly,
She shall teach thee for thy earning
All the littleness of learning !
 'Tis the shadow of the tomb.

Ay, but fame shall be my guerdon ;—
Fame, I think, not far extendeth,
And like other things it endeth !
 'Tis the shadow of the tomb.

Time, I ponder, fleeting, fleeting,
Once my slave, is now my master,
Like a torrent, faster, faster !
 'Tis the shadow of the tomb.

Is it well that I, so earnest,
Sicken at the worldly strife,—
Feel the nothingness of life ?
 'Tis the shadow of the tomb.

Sweet contentment, wert thou darkness ?
Have I hallow'd wrong for right ?
Why perturbeth me the light ?—
 'Tis the shadow of the tomb.

More to Heaven I bend my vision,
More and more in God confiding,
More and more in God residing :
 Past the shadow of the tomb.



Golden Moments.

Of itself the soul is conscious,
Knoweth that it lives sublime,
Out of space and out of time.

Love begot is unconfined
By the Earth or Arc above,—
What is worth on earth, but love?

Each on each, abstracted, leaning—
Eye to eye, and cheek to cheek—
Musing more than tongue can speak.

Friend, my friend, O friend eternal !
What shall sympathy control—
When we see each other's soul?

Gaily we converse together,—
Strive wherever words can reach ;
What else need we, having speech?

In a waking dream I ponder,
Thinking out and writing thought,
Coining treasure out of nought.

Thought abstruse, by others written,
Weans me from the mortal strife,
Charms me in a charmed life.

Words of praise alone are sounding,
Words of praise that promise fame ;
Have I made myself a name ?

Heart still in a holy silence,
Knowing dread that is not fear,
Doubting not that God is near.



Ignis Fatuus.

WAIT, oh wait ! for life is new,
Time will bring thy heart's desire,
Thy young hopes shall tell thee true,—
If thou aspire.

Wait, oh wait ! though sped the boy,
Let not care precede the day,
Thy long future hath of joy
All that you pray.

Wait, oh wait ! though manhood's prime
Hath not satisfied thy will,
Be not out of heart with time,
It cometh still.

Wait, oh wait ! if love to thee
Hath till now been bitterness,
She is coming, fair and free,
Thy life to bless.

Wait, oh wait ! the world as yet
Doth not heed thy voice or pen ?
Wiser growing, thou wilt get
The praise of men.

Wait, oh wait ! though knavish fools
Take the prizes rightly thine,
Thou dost doubt the Fate that rules,
If thou repine.

Wait, oh wait ! if thou hast past
The climacteric of thy years,
Highest honour comes at last,
 Suppress thy tears.

Wait, oh wait ! if strength decays,
And thy future seemeth brief,
Note, that those who wear the bays
 Have greater grief.

Wait, oh wait !, if hope no more
Trick thee with delusions fond,
All thy triumphs are in store,—
 In life beyond.



The Skylark Caged.

WHAT wouldst thou tell? wing'd voice that singeth
Imprison'd there,—
Prison'd! a lot that unto man but bringeth
Untold despair.

Is it then joy that from thy narrow cage
Escapes in song?
Or but the passion of poetic rage
To vent thy wrong?

Or hear we now the music of the spheres?
Pent up in thee!
Sobbing—more sweetly than in sighs and tears—
Thine agonie.

Or dost thou cry unto some far-off mate,
That in the skies
To the empyrean soars to learn thy fate,
Until she dies?

Caged—doth the soul of man, like thee, rejoicing,
On music's wing—
Mount, the loud beatings of the heart outvoicing,
As thou dost sing.

Caged—doth the soul of man, like thee upsoaring,
Seek heaven for balm,
Till, from its thrall released, and its deploring,
It rests in calm.

O soul of man ! regard that skylark's rapture
Through wire-bars free ;—
When dark-stoled melancholie doth thee capture,
Sing,—singing flee !



Leniter Ridens.

WHEN we sit with folk about us,
Caring not of those without us,
Witting not of such as flout us,
Then we smile.

When away from our belongings,
And alone, in nights or mornings,
We survey our rightings—wrongings,
Then we smile.

When of those who should believe us,
Some we love, at proof, deceive us,
Some we love not misconceive us,
Then we smile.

When some vaunt them holier, better,
Virtue proving—to the letter!
By their thoughts our thought to fetter,—
Then we smile.

When some pique them richer, grander,
And to wealth would have us pander,
Or profess that truth is slander,
Then we smile.

When one claiming to be wiser,
Of his knowledge is a miser,
Yet would be our proud adviser,
Then we smile.

When, with chosen friends, discoursing,
Our plerophories enforcing,—
Loving confidence endorsing,
Then we smile.

When, ingrattitudes forgetting,
We have cease of useless fretting,
Thinking but—the Sun is setting,
Then we smile.

When, at last, to Nature bending,
And, in faith of truth depending,
We reflect upon the ending,
Then we smile.



The Sun=Dial.

(HORAS NON NUMERO NISI SERENAS.)

ONLY the sunny hours !
The home of gloom
Is in Oblivion's tomb.

Only the sunny hours !
Hold—for they haste ;
Let care, as shadows, waste.

Only the sunny hours !
The clouds between—
As if they had not been.

Only the sunny hours !
Truth can but shine,
Error to shade incline.

Only the sunny hours !
Honour is clear,
And baseness hides in fear.

Only the sunny hours !
Count gain—not loss,
The ore, and not the dross.

Only the sunny hours !
If love hath flown,
Rejoice how once it shone.

Only the sunny hours !
Thy friend decays ?
Think of the joyous days.

Only the sunny hours !
Some hopes have failed ?
Cherish what hath prevail'd.

Only the sunny hours !
Dark—is distress,
And light is happiness.

Only the sunny hours !
All Life is Light,
All Death is as the Night.

Only the sunny hours !
And when 'tis done,
Show, with the Dial's powers,
And, as the fruits and flowers,
The record of the Sun.



EMOTION.



A Love Song.

My love's a miracle ; to me alone
Her beauty liveth ;
Her lucent eye alone to mine
Its light out-giveth.

Others her mortal countenance may scan,
And find it fair,
But oh ! they see not, as I see,
The *lustre* there.

She comes—and lo ! as by some mystic spell,
Earth disappears,
And I am living out of Time,
Amid the spheres.

She looks—and I, in gazing, am abash'd
Her soul to see ;
For when she looks, her form and face
Are lost to me.

She speaks—and I suppose that other ears
Hear woman's voice,
The while for me soft tones of heaven
My heart rejoice.

She moves—and from her course obstructions fade,
For so it seemeth
That, passing, she doth glide or float,
As one that dreameth,—

But that her motion harmonies attend,
Supernal, sweet ;
And cadences, in pauses true,
Fall with her feet.

She smiles—and instant flashes forth the Sun,
All round so bright ;
Distraught, I fain would turn away,
As dazed with light.

She laughs—and with ethereal echoings
The sky resoundeth ;
And in the glee, from height to height,
My spirit boundeth.

She sings—the winds, all earthly sounds, are hush'd ;
The angels list ;
And I am with them flying, flying,
On wings of mist.

My love is gone—how blank and dark it is !—
And hope how vain !
Except, that on a day my love
Will come again.



Sybil.

HER face uplifted, and she look'd—
A look that spake !
Not—not to me :
But, to see her eye so grand and bright,
Enough—enough for my delight—
I bless'd her for that other's sake,
As the slave blesseth the free.

Her face uplifted, and she smiled—
Her soul a smile !
Not—not for me :
Yet, to see her face so heavenly bright,
Enough—enough for my delight—
I bless'd her that did him beguile,
As the slave blesseth the free.

Her face uplifted, and she blush'd—
Her heart a blush !
Not—not for me :
Yet, to see that sight of pink and white,
Enough—enough for my delight—
I bless'd the face one else could flush,
As the slave blesseth the free.



The Early Song.

Ah, I bethink me, dear, longing still on and on,
What numberless new things are there to see !
And I'm rejoicing me now, in foreshadowing,
To be beholding them,

Lucy, with thee.

Spring will be coming soon, trees will be budding forth
Flowers will be blossoming over the lea ;
Birds will be carolling,—and I'll be happy then,
Looking and listening,

Lucy, with thee.

Are there not rivers, and lakes amid mountains high,
Countries and cities beyond the broad sea ?
Are they not waiting, and glowing, and flowing on,
Until I visit them,

Lucy, with thee ?

Endless the wonders of nature and skilfulness,
Spread o'er the world we shall wander in free ;
Blest are they all to me, lovely or terrible,
In that I'll witness them,

Lucy, with thee.

Jewels, and pictures, and sculptures, and palaces,
Rare things and fair things of highest degree,

Are beaming in colours and grace and magnificence,
All to be look'd upon,

Lucy, with thee.

Nought it concerneth me, Wiseacre's whispering,
'Ever these have been, and ever will be ;'
Nought are they worth to me than dust and ashes all,—
If I behold them not,

Lucy, with thee.



Perdita.

WHEN her eye no more discourseth
Language more than tongue can say—
Then be sure the spell is broken,
And true love doth fade away.

When her touch no more respondeth
To thy touch from heart to heart,
Then be sure true love declineth—
Demons whisper, 'We must part.'

When no more her smile entranceth,
Raiseth up the soul of joy,—
Then, alas ! true love hath vanish'd,
Helen hath gone out of Troy.

When her lips no more do sweeten,
Sweeten more the more they press,
Then no more belie thy senses,
True love every hour is less.

If no more her patter-patter
Moved thee as it went and came,
True love's warmth was of the ashes,
And no longer of the flame.

When no more the silken rustle
Of her robe doth charm thine ear,
Then, for all her fond caresses,
True love will give way to fear.

When her voice no more resoundeth—
All the strains of earth above,
Then—desist from sighing, weeping—
Go thou—seek another love.



Coqueta.

My day is over !
My pride all past !
No more a rover—
Have married the last !

‘ Ever adore you,
Ever mine own ! ’
Bah ! now I bore you,
Now rivals are flown !

Worse than a Zany
List’ning to such,—
Were there not many
Who loved me as much ?

The men admire me,—
For them the fun ;
Wherefore desire me,
Belonging to one ?

Onetime, their fury—
Duel,—or toast !
Sit as my Jury,—
Pass me as a ghost !

‘ Bright your eyes ! Minna ;
Your face how fair !
Slender waist, Minna ;
How silken your hair ! ’

No one to praise me,—
Beauty all lost !
Surely to craze me
Is what it will cost !

What does it matter ?
Live so : alas !
Only to flatter
Myself—in the glass !

Chagrin to cover,
Laugh I in pain :
Not—not one lover ?
COQUETA again !



Ænigma.

TRUE of heart, as false of tongue,
Old in art, albeit so young,
Darkly hiding whence she sprung.

Pretty lips, with smile so sweet,
Pretty lips, with fibs so fleet,
Pretty lips, with kiss to greet.

Placid smile withouten guile,
Syren smile with hidden wile—
Winning, winning all the while.

Eyes of fire without desire,
Eyes the same for love or ire,
Eyes to look on and admire.

Somewhen wild, and somewhen mild,
Somewhen praised, anon reviled,—
Simple as a prattling child.

Free of care as passing air,
Flinching not to do and dare,
Somewhiles facing blank despair.

Dark in word as fair in deed,
Generous to grant the meed,
Never failing at the need.

Rash of speech, discreet to teach,
Patient list'ner when you preach—
None the worse or better each !

Words do flow you should not know—
Words that out of nothing grow,—
Knowledge sought, she answers,—No.

Somewhen wise, to your surprise,
Volatile as butterflies,
Sparse of truth, diffuse of lies.

So Ænigma passes life,
Smiling on, evading strife,
Making many wish her Wife.



Brunetta.

BEAUTIFUL eyes so bright,
Are ye shaded never,
Till ye close in night,—
Their effulgence clear
Beaming ever, ever ?

Beautiful eyes so bright,
Do ye never gloom,
Ere ye close in night,—
Though men dying live
Pondering their doom ?

Beautiful eyes so bright,
Do ye never weep,
Ere ye close in night,—
Wretches, by *their* wounds,
Writhing, though they sleep ?

Beautiful eyes so bright,
Will ye ever fade,
Ere the final night,—
When their tenement
In its shroud is laid ?



Love-Stricken.

THEY say that the King will be there
 With his Queen, and her courtly dames ;
 They say that the honour I'll share
 In their skilful and chivalric games,—
 Ah, what is it all to my love?

They say there'll be worthies of state,
 Ambassadors, Princes, and Peers ;
 And scholars of merit most great,
 Whose fame has advanced with their years,—
 Ah, what is it all to my love?

They say there'll be music and song,
 And objects the eye to delight,—
 To the ear do soft accents belong,
 To the eye the blest pleasures of sight,—
 Ah, what is it all to my love?

They say there'll be feasting and glee,
 And jesting, and dancing, and wine ;
 Oh, these are as nothing to me,
 Who have found a companion divine !
 Ah, what is it all to my love?



Love-Lost.

I.

I LOVED My Love,
And my love was, as the Sun at his ascension,
Resplendent, clear and strong ;

I loved My Love,
And my love was, as the Sun at his declension,
Calming—as coming sleep :

I loved My Love,
And methought my love is, as the lamp that flickers,
Uncertain of its life,—
Flaring, fading,
Brightening, decreasing,
Somewhiles nearly dying !

II.

The torch is out !
What can relume it ?
The torch is out—
My heart is cold and void.

The torch is out !
Thou would'st relume it ?
Not so—not so,—
It will not kindle there.

The torch is out,
Who would relume it
Must fire a heart,—
Must re-create a soul !



The Song of Othello.

SHE is my soul's delight,
Of life my joy is she,—
The Sun, the Stars are bright,
Less bright—less bright to me !

She is my soul's delight ;
Ah, could she faithless be,—
Not dark of darkest night
So dark would seem to me !

She was my soul's delight !
I know that false is she,—
Oh, dark of darkest night,
Less dark—less dark to me !



Song.

LOVE me, my love, why or whether,
Love me,—love me as I love thee ;
So the time when we are together
A foretaste of Heaven shall be.

What matter the world or the weather,
If lost in the thought—we have met ?
We know but that we are together,
And everything else forget.

What matter, or flower or feather,—
Are not four eyes better than two ?
And, dear, what we see not together,
Is nothing to me !—nor to you ?

Love me, my love, why or whether,
Love me,—love me as I love thee ;
So the time when we are together
A foretaste of Heaven shall be.



A Lament.

HE is gone : our hopes and fears
Are ended now—by death ;
And from his parting breath
Outspring our tears !

Gone,—ah ! wherefore was he born
But—but to mock our love ?
But—but to soar above,
And make us mourn ?

Yet not mourn without relief,
For, loving, we shall own
That never to have known
Were deeper grief.

Never Davy to have seen,
His pretty, gentle face,
His unlearnt baby grace,
And look serene ;

Not the quick though steady eye,
The mounting forehead fair,
Cluster'd with Saxon hair
In 'brutus' high ;

Davy's eye, observant, blue,
His brow of noble traits,
Thoughtful in infant days,
Of promise true ;

Never list his laughing joy,
Proving by every sense,
A clear intelligence,
And all the boy.

It were greater loss and woe,
Not to have seen him—dead,
In loveliness unsaid
On th' earth below ;

Beauty that unto him came
New when earth-life had past,
And hover'd to the last,
A lambent flame ;

Beauty yet unshed, innate,—
As bud involveth bloom,—
Subliming to assume
A saintlier state.



The Last Good-bye.

MOTHER ! no more we'll see thy face,
No more will hear thy voice,
Lost—lost the sympathetic tones
That made our hearts rejoice.

Yet will the Seasons come and go,
The Sun, the Moon, will shine,
But all our consciousness will lack
The portion which was thine.

So now begin we life anew,—
Past, present, future changed ;
Full many an old, accustom'd thought
From us will be estranged.

Dear Mother ! absent though thou art,
To *me* thou livest still,
For carnal Death is impotent
The Life in Love to kill.



Love and Time.

SAID'ST thou the time was brief?
Who stole the hours away?
Stern justice bids me say
Thou wert the thief!

Shall I then blame thee for
The theft that gave me joy?
And, lest thou Time destroy,
Flee from thy presence, or

Shall I, contented, bless
The charmer and the charm,
That can so sweetly harm
In sweet forgetfulness?

Oh, then, increase thy crime,—
That, if from day to day
Thou steal the hours away,
There'll be an end of Time!



Leonora.

* * * *

TURNING, her face shone on me—to my sight,
Alas ! surpassing speech : the vision dwells—
My memory haunting as a ghostly guest ;
Or chance, or change, or trouble, space, or time,
To me not dim that full expression fair :
Melt, melting eyes, ye cannot freeze to me ;
Smile, dimpled cheeks, to me for ever smile ;
Pout, pretty lips, to me for ever pout ;
Beam, sunny brow—that cannot on me frown ;
Shine, seraph-countenance, for ever shine,—
To me the same whilst constant is my mind,
Seen, though in darkness, or though eyes be blind !



Felicia.

LADY, the nightingale did sing, full-hearted,
As on my homeward way
I linger'd yesterday,
Oppress'd with sorrow that from thee I'd parted ;
(Ah ! tuneful, happy sprite,
Singing thy roundelay
Of all that love can say
Throughout the charmed night !
Why is our lot, alas ! so different—
Art thou more blest, or I less innocent ?)

Dearest, if the soul do wander,
As the Orientals tell,
Into various tenements
Still on earth to dwell,
Then I pray, whate'er my fate,
Thou a nightingale may be,
Hymning, aye, at Heaven's gate
From a spring-time tree ;
Never but in music speaking,
Smiled on by the listening stars,
Soothing man in his distress,
Joy attain'd yet keenly seeking,—
Only varying the bars
Of a sweet-toned happiness !

Impromptu.

AH ! Lady, pity the poor fluttering mite,
Which, madden'd by the radiance of thine eye,
Found, that to taste of the intense delight,
Was but to feed ambition, and to die.

The memory cherish of the tiny bird,
That, proudly scornful of the taper's flame,
In orbéd brightness instant death preferr'd
To the spun pleasure of a joy more tame.

So dared have I, when those twin meteors blazed,
To bask a moment in the liquid fire ;
So, at the flashing tempters have I gazed,
And known that but to look was to expire.



The Love Test.

OH ! frank, fond kiss—oh ! honey'd kiss,
Of lips to lips, and clinging ;
Oh ! heart rejoice, whilst her clear voice
Mine ear within is ringing.

If that sweet kiss e'er quit my lips,
I'll think she is offended ;
When those dear tones mine ear not owns,
I'll know her love is ended.



Violetta.

VIOLET on that bosom white,
Did its loveliness decoy thee ?
Soon thou sheddest thy delight,
Quickly will its warmth destroy thee !

So, the lure knew I too late,
In the spell of her soft eye ;
Violet, happier thy fate
That doth on her bosom die !



The Blush.

BLUSHING, thou charmest me most, my dear,
For it's then that I'm sure thou art all mine own ;
When blushing, I know thou'st forgotten to fear !
And I know thou art loveliest then, my love.

I think when thou blushest thy heart overflows,
Ah ! how full must *thy* heart be for that, my love ;
The tint is as rosy as that of the rose,
Only warmer—much warmer ! is't not, my love ?



Pity or Envy.

LOVE me ! or pity not :
Mine image all outblot ;—
Lest I that wretch should be,
Pitied for losing thee !

[Will love from pity grow ?
Cold reason tells me no ;
May greater spring from less ?
Hope faintly whispers, yes !]

Give but thy Love to me ;—
Pity to hell be hurl'd !—
Then am I, *gaining* thee,
The *envy* of the world.



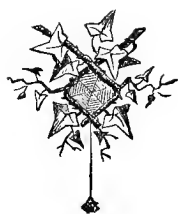
The Inconstant.

So you think she deserves not my love ;
That she's fickle, and may be untrue ?
Well, why should I fret or complain
That she seems not to me as to you ?
For I love her, I love her, you see,
And I think that she much loveth me.

I have look'd into eyes that were grander,
And enfolded a bosom more fair,
Taken honey from ruddier lips,
And toy'd with more soft silken hair :
But I love her, I love her, you see,
And I think that she much loveth me.

I've rejoiced with a spirit more frank,
A more bland and beneficent grace ;
I have won me a tenderer smile
Than the sweet sunny beam of her face ;
But I love her, I love her, you see,
And I think that she much loveth me.

Ha ! you say that on *him* she'll bestow
The same favour I thought only mine ?
Well, it's pity, and serveth to show
That, as mortal, she's not quite divine :
For I'd love her, I'd love her, you see,
Though I knew that she *not* loveth me.



VARIOUS.



Last Words to my Lorgnette.

I.

COMPANION of serenest hours,
Good genius of mine eyes,
To aid me with thy magic powers—
Rich in thy memories !
O constant friend through fleeting years,
Since we must part ere long,
List, whilst I mingle smiles and tears,—
My valedictory song.

II.

Impress'd upon thy crystal arc
Are countless lovely things ;—
E'en that to sit—thy form to mark—
Sweet recollection brings ;
Yet, to recall what thou dost hold
Were more than I may hope,
Nor would I wish thee all unfold
From thy kaleidoscope.

III.

Ah ! dost thou think of that first day
When we began delight ?
A multitudinous array
Of dames in colours bright :

Then wert thou new, then I was young,
And it were rash to tell,
Or more, or less, to thee or me,
The joy that then befell.

IV.

Those eyes, those lineaments, those smiles,
Those glances slily soft,
Till, to assure ourselves—too well,
We look'd again—too oft !
Thou know'st we saw a maiden's cheek
So redden'd with a blush,
That thy two orbs, so cold and meek,
Partook the crimson flush.

V.

We look'd again, and saw, beside
That fair one, looking down,
A dark face, blanch'd with rage and pride,
And a portentous frown ;
Thy firm frame shiver'd at the shock,
And when I thee withdrew,
I saw thy glossy surfaces
Bedimm'd with frigid dew.

VI.

Dost thou remember that grand dame,
Castilian, high-born,
Of whom we knew not e'en the name—
So beauteous in her scorn ?
Of her I know, beyond thy ken,
And more, I know right well,
That, but for thee, I ne'er had won
The smile of Ysabel.

VII.

Rememb'rest thou, across the stage,
That dancing fairy fair,
How we her notice did engage
On earth, or in the air?
She flew, bird-like, again—again!
As if our glance to greet,
Whilst wonder'd we what *could* sustain
Her pretty twinkling feet.

VIII.

A noble lady once we found
Endow'd with eyes of fire,
We met them as they gazed around,
And ask'd, 'Is't love or ire?'
And then we look'd again, to heed
A look all looks above!
Then, in our beating hearts agreed—
'It is the look of love.'

IX.

We felt it—burning through thy lens!
Who would that look define
Will need a power beyond the pen's,
A tongue more skill'd than mine.
I took thee down in sudden fear
And trembling—for thy sake,
Lest, by such heat, thy mirrors clear
Should into atoms break.

X.

Canst thou forget that Actor great—
Whose features we did scan

Whilst wrestling with a hopeless fate,
Till he seem'd more than man?
I felt thee shudder in my hand,
And pitied thee thy pain,
Yet thought, with thee—'It is so grand,
We'll suffer it again.'

XI.

Rememb'rest thou—a face I knew,
At distance, dimly guess'd?
I sought thy help, and, by thy view,
Good hap—perceived the rest.
We mark'd his movements, saw his hate,
And said—'Tis very clear,—
Good hap, for us 'tis not too late,—
We stay no longer here.'

XII.

Some secrets are there us between,
Which fain with us must die.
And some of such a kind I ween
To seal our sympathy.
I thank thee for unreckon'd smiles
Which came through thee to me,—
Let us, when life no more beguiles,
Together buried be.



Song.

‘VIVE LA FOLIE!’

BURTHEN base of mortal cares
That, of the godlike, nothing spares,—
Takes the soul from out us wholly ;
Joy and jollity rise unawares,
Then, away with melancholie !
Vive la folie !

Weary, bored with life's humdrum,
Waiting for joy that doth not come,—
Wit and fancy fly us wholly ;
Tippie and smoke, and sing fee-fo-fum,
Ho ! away with melancholie !
Vive la folie !

Work is good, and work is dry ;
Live a little before you die,—
For a while forget it wholly ;
Fiddle and dance, and laugh till you cry,—
Ho ! away with melancholie !
Vive la folie !

Grind and grind, and gather wealth,
And have everything but health,—
Zest for joyance losing wholly ;
Off for a rollick—sweeter by stealth ;—
Ho ! away with melancholie !
Vive la folie !

Pore and fret, let knowledge grow,
The more we learn the less we know,—
Till content deserts us wholly :
Summon the Ladies,—and shout ho, ho !
Ho ! away with melancholie !
Vive la folie !



Dulce Sodalitium.

OFF to the woods with my Myra,
Through thicket or glade,
In sunshine or shade,
Wandering away with Myra.

Ranging the woods with my Myra,
Wait under the trees,
To list the wild bees,
Threading the maze with Myra.

Under the trees with my Myra,
The Zephyrs play round
To the vari-tuned note
Of the feather'd sprites' throat,
And the rivulet's sound,—
Resting and harking with Myra.

Roving on, on with my Myra,
Now sit on the grass,
Watch Butterfly pass—
Happy as I with Myra.

Far, and more far with my Myra,
The world is all ours,
We gather gay flowers,
Just for Botany's sake,
Or garlands to make,
Garlands to make for Myra.

Over the hills with my Myra,
Aye talk as we walk,
And laugh as we chaff,
Looking up to the skies,—
To hear the lark sing,
Or in each other's eyes
Mute music to bring,—
Over the hills with Myra.

Far, and more far with my Myra,
For ever to roam,
To never go home,
Ever at home with Myra.

Down to the Lake with my Myra,
Eftsoons in the boat
Together afloat,
'Mid lilies to steer,
In ripples so clear—
Bright as the eyes of Myra.

Home at the eve with my Myra,
Enchanted in glory
Of Song, or of Story,
Only—not lonely, with Myra.



The Eddystone.

BLITHE Winstanley came unto Plymouth one eve,
His Fisher-friend hailing, 'Ho, ho !
I am bound for my Lighthouse to challenge the storm ;'
And his Fisher-friend answered, ' No, no !

' There is bane in the welkin, and fury and fume,
Such as none but a Seaman can know ;
Those that venture to-night will not many return.'
Blithe Winstanley said, ' I shall go !

' I couch in my Lighthouse to laugh at the Storm ;
Shall I not to mine own work be true ?
I built it for ages, and not for a night !
Must it perish, let me perish too !'

Then he came to his Tower, and his brave watchers hail'd
Saying, ' Though now 'tis so sunny and warm,
They have told me of terror wrapp'd up in the night,
So here have I hasten'd to soothe you from fright,
And be with you, to laugh at the Storm !'

And fondly he look'd on the pride of his life,
With its minarets gilded and gay,
' On this shall men gaze, or from Ship or from Shore,
Or by night or daylight—'mid the Ocean's mad roar,
A long age after I pass away !'

Darkest dark was the sky, wildest wild came the Storm
Bringing ruin to Ship, House, and Tree ;
They saw the gaunt reef at the day's dawning hour,
The dread reef alone—for the Man and the Tower
Were at one with the Infinite Sea !



Sevilla.

IN after-days I oft shall praise
The towers, and flowers, of fair Sevilla ;
Her sun and shade and busy ways
Graced by the Doñas in mantilla ;
Her grand Cathedral's solemn gloom ;
Her zephyrs sweet with orange-bloom ;
Her patios cool with pure azúl,
And all her Moorish maravilla ;
But chief in memory will rule,
(As far above as great Orion !)
 A sprite or bird
 Which there I heard ;
 An English tongue,
 That spake or sung
 In simple sooth
 Or careless truth,—
The clear, frank laugh of Dame Carlyon !

SEVILLA, 1st May 1860.



For 'Weber's Last Waltz.'¹

AIR.

BE still, be still, my soul, is this delusion,
Or is my spirit free from earthly bondage?
Those strains seraphic cannot be illusion—
Ah, no! they are . . for sure . . from heaven . . from
heaven.

INTERLUDE.

Mortal—mortal! thou art not translated,
Yet art thou habiting this lower sphere;
O soul! to hear those accents thou hast waited;—
Once having listen'd, must I linger here?

AIR.

Hark, hark—oh list! again, again 'tis sounding—
Now—now I hear thy echoing melody—
Now—now 'tis ringing through the host surrounding,
In tones . . divine . . decreasing . . softly slow.

AIR.

Rest, rest, my heart—for thee this world is over—
Rest, spirit! thy celestial home is nigh.—
I hear—I hear! and they are Angels' voices,—
I hear—I hear!—and . . now . . I die—I die.

¹ Verse 1 is to be played in usual time, except last line, which is gradually slow; the Interlude, rather softly; verse 3 with fervour, quick time, diminishing at the end; verse 4 slowly, and gently decreasing in force to the conclusion.

A Hymn for all People.

ALMIGHTY Father, hear!
Our voice to Thee we raise
In gratitude and fear ;
And, tunefully, to praise
Thy holy Name, confessing,
With humble heart, our sin,—
Beseeching for Thy blessing.
Great God, so long forbearing
With us, the while transgressing,
And oft for Thee uncaring,—
Let not Thy wrath begin !
We have done ill, unknowing,
And, thanklessly, received ;—
But, Thy mercy much exceedeth,
As our faultful nature needeth ;—
Oh ! cease not Thou bestowing,
That we be not bereaved !



To Sarah at School,

ANTICIPATING THE HOLIDAYS.

PRETTY, merry-laughing Sister,
This will find thee ever gay,
Brimming-full of hope and joyance,
Seeking still a happier day.

From the mirth thy heart o'erflowing
Wouldst thou wisely make a store,—
Though I wish not, yet there shall be
Times when thou wilt want it more.

What a fund were that for after !
Fairy Sister, fancy-free,—
Precious fund of merry laughter,
All enough for thee and me.

'Through our lives, however lengthen'd,
Thou shouldst from thy store dispense
Balm divine for every sorrow,
Joy distill'd from innocence.

That may fail thee, merry Sister,
So laugh out the little span ;
And be it a rule of living,—
To be merry when you can.



Impromptu—The Mirror.

THE mirror broken ? never mind !
Let not such breakage breed dejection ;
Nor will I scold, whilst yet I hold
The Cause of its most sweet reflection.



Vale !

LADY, believe,
Though but few hours ago
Each other's face we did not know,
 There's one will grieve
That needs so soon we part,
And hoard thine image ever in his heart.
 Oh, happy fate,
'That hath endow'd it with so sweet a mate !



Impromptu—A Whim.

SHUT, shut, blest eyes!—turn, turn away, fond face!
Tend not wherefrom that moment thou must sever;
Yet oh! let sorrow next to joy give place,—
For what, at sight, thou lov'st, is thine for ever.



Impromptu—Kindred.

SOME acts there are, of human kind;
Beyond this earthly sphere,
Some thoughts in other worlds to find
The home they have not here.

And such will be the kindred traits
That stamp the heavenly face,
Whereby the loves of mortal days
Affinity shall trace.



The Sermon.

MADAM—when, sitting in the Church,
I see thee near the parson shining,
Howe'er recondite his research,
I, gazing, list, without repining ;
And whilst, in fairness, I agree
With those who call the sermon prosy,
Mine eyes (as shut they could not see)
Forget entirely to be dozy.



The Answer.

AY, lady dear ! whate'er—I'll go to see thee ;
For, in thy presence, time is very sweet,
And, in thy presence, joy is very great ;
But cometh soon the moment I must flee thee,
The end most bitter of sweet time too fleet,
And sorrow greater—when we separate !



Impromptu.

As a cloud before the Moon,
So is life,—pass'd by as soon ;
So is life to mortals given,—
Hiding sight, not hope, of Heaven.



Song—The Rose.

SWEET Rose ! from thy kindred sever'd,
From thy parent stem—alone !
In spring-drops pure I place thee—
Ah, did I hear thee groan ?

I weep, e'en to guess thy feeling,
And, in fancy, hear thee sigh,—
That sigh the thought revealing,—
Thou wert but born to die !



Prelude

TO A COMMON-PLACE BOOK.

NOUGHT to me e'er pleasure brought,
Like participating thought !
If silent, deep's the joy we feel,
To find our own, another's weal ;
The bright conception, unexpressed
Yet to ourselves,—by others drest ;
Truly, and touchingly, that shown
Which we had thought were all our own.
This mutual insight of the mind,
This glimpse to which a third is blind,
This interchange of feeling, this
Sincere, though momentary bliss,—
Should it,—as bliss had been the cost,
If by me it now were lost,
Should that, which bliss had caused to be,
Be straight forgotten then by me ?

1835.



With Hood's 'Annual.'(1840.)¹

LADY, the books herewith thy favour claim !
Thou shalt find Wisdom drest in Folly's garb,
Good sense instill'd with all the force of smiles,
Truth its own language speaking to the heart ;
Thou shalt know Virtue when she doth not frown,
And pathos undisturb'd by groans and tears,—
And learn, by pleasant proof, that laughing out
Doth better recreate than doleful dreaming.
That keen, though bloodless weapon, Satire named,
(Sometimes misused in aid of personal spite,
But then most weak,) doth in these pages strike,
With cunning aim, and guileless artifice,—
To wound for cure, chastising faults which else,
Congenial being, and in colour like
To a degraded nature, had remain'd
Uncared for, or unseen.

On thee—on thee !
The shafts of satire must all pointless fall.

¹ This date was prior to the general recognition of Hood's *genius*.



The Fifth of November.

THERE was a time, my brothers,
Ere to man's estate we came,
When the fifth day of November
To us brought a merry game ;
Oh ! the banging squibs and crackers,
And the rockets and the wheels,
Still memory smells the powder,
And the trepidation feels.

Then Guy Fawkes, that wretched hero,
Was reduced to ashes quite,
As the red remorseless tar-tub
Completed our fierce delight ;
Yet, like the famous Phoenix,
From the flames to re-appear,
And make this day, next winter,
Unlike other in the year.

Now, the fifth day of November
To us brings—perhaps a fog ;
'Tis a Monday or a Tuesday,
Or—a day to burn a log ;
We wonder much those simpletons
That 'guy' should hawk about,
And then, with squibs and crackers,
Will make that infernal rout.



Sage and Disciple.

MASTER, for thy learning,
Much my soul is yearning !
Why don't Man live longer,
Longer live, and stronger,
Wisdom always earning ?
This is my surprise.

Son, thy thought hath reason,
With thy youth in season ;
Yet, to wish life longer,
Longer life, and stronger,
To our God were treason !
Man would grow too wise.



Pyrrha.

THY golden tresses, Pyrrha,
 Illumine my silvery pate,
As oft the sunshine blesses
 A wretch disconsolate.

Thy golden dowers, Cleon,
 To me much more are worth,
As oft the summer showers
 Refresh the thirsty Earth.

Nay, nay ! thy gold, my Pyrrha,
 Is finer gold than mine ;
For these resplendent tresses
 Around my *heart* entwine.

My heart thou bindest, Cleon,
 About with cords of gold ;
Else, lover though the kindest,
 Might Pyrrha think thee old.

Ah ! lovely, saucy Pyrrha,—
 Thy gold is more than gold ;
For, near these glowing tresses,
 I never can be old !



Prospero.

O MOTHER ! how shall I spell ?
Sister can spell every word ;
I wish to do it as well.—
Try, dear, try.

Solomon Stratton can swim ;
Often I think I shall drown ;
Why can't I do it like him ?—
Sink, to swim.

Algebra bothers my brains ;
Herbert, with ease, took the prize ;
What have I earn'd for my pains ?—
Work, to earn.

Tumble I went at that fence ;
Fleming sat firm as a rock ;
Surely my riding's pretence !—
Bravest first.

They skate, like train on a rail ;
I cannot keep on my legs ;
On ice one's courage does fail !—
Fall, to rise.

The balls run just where they say ;
How do they drive 'em so sure ?
Billiards I never shall play !—
Wish and will.

Hand ! me thou wilt not obey ;
 Craftsman—it's legerdemain !
 Why is my work as your play ?—
 Skill comes late.

Science to me is a maze,
 Albeit some prate it so glib ;
 Mercy ! my head it will craze ;—
 Think, to know.

Strange ! how such pictures they make ;
 My trial is but a daub ;
 Palette and brush I'll forsake !—
 Nought for nought.

Music I love, and would play,
 Art superhuman it seems ;
 Practice to me is dismay !—
 Zeal doubts not.

Thoughts to the world would I tell ;
 Difficult effort it proves ;
 Some, not my betters, write well.—
 Think well, first.

What is the Orator's power ?
 Me, public speaking confounds ;
 Some men can spout by the hour.—
 Heart breeds speech.

Fix'd was my hope on that chance !
 Lost ! whither now shall I go ?
 Backwards whilst others advance !—
 Mend thy spring.

Ruin ! half-way up to fame,
Down from the ladder I fell ;
Nothing is left me but shame !—
If low, mount.

My love ! ah, half of my soul !
Yet she my love has denied ;
Hard my distress to control !—
Love prevails.

Oh, to determine the right !
Wrong hath its reasons as well ;
Error like truth is bedight !—
Truth will win.

Firm in their faith, do they preach
What nothing on earth can prove ;
How to such faith shall I reach ?—
Faith is *born*.

What has become of my prayer ?
Struggle, and struggle in vain ;
Broken heart whispers despair !—
Pray, pray, pray !



Stigma Loweri.

READ AFTER DINNER—25TH JANUARY 1860.

MARK ANTONY LOWER's a prince at '*palaver*,'
But, plainly to speak, a most rascally carver ;
Twice his aid at the table no host will employ,
Having seen the arch-spoiler hew, hack, and destroy ;
As Hecuba's, dire the despair of the wife
Who ever has trusted his hand with a knife ;
That moment all reason and sense fly away,
He seizes your prog as a tiger his prey ;
Your Beef he saws thick, your Down Mutton thin,
Or if it be Fish serves out nothing but fin ;
If Chicken he causes beholders to groan,
Tearing flesh into ribbons, and sinew from bone ;
Seeing near him a Ham, you ask him for *that*,—
When straightway he gives you a dollop of fat ;
In the matter of Pie put not in him your trust,
Lest wishing for fruit you get nothing but crust :
He's been known, many times, to be very profuse
With the savoury stuffing, forgetting the Goose,—
And wisely avoiding your steel blade to tarnish,
Help the lady who's next him to nothing but garnish ;
He can cut with a pen, and concoct you a dish
Out of fine modern ink with an ancient *relish*,
But in carving, and *sarving*, of Lower beware,
Else, though you be parson, he'll cause you to swear.

Thus though in the higher you recognise Lower,
In this art which is lower, you love him no more !



Mark Antony Lower enjoys his 'vacation,'
But says there's no time in it for—recreation ;
And then for long months he pursues his 'vocation'
Like horse in a mill without any cessation :
Hence a problem provoking no small botheration,
Namely—which is *vocation* and which is *vacation* ?
For the difference here between *vo* and *va*
Should value the same as between work and play,
Or even as much as between *do* and *say* ;
(Not to mention the contrast, in aim *foul* or *fair*,
Nor if 'tis your purpose to *spoil* or to *spare*.)
But whether in *vo* or whether in *va*,
Or whether in work or whether in play.
Or whether in *do* or whether in *say*,
The metamorphosis is with *O* and *A* ;
So with Lower—a slave who ne'er kicks off his fetters—
Call it work, call it play, it's a question of '*letters*.'



The Curate.

FOUNDED ON FACT.

IN a village not far from 'the city of smoke,'
Where, if bitter the scandal, the better the joke,
A place much infested with (very) old maids,
Who, declining, are pining for spiritual aids,—
Where tradesmen learn brotherly love at 'the Shades,'
There dwells a young Curate, ah, so interesting !
He wins by a look, by his mode of requesting,
And so sweetly retiring, 'tis said by his friends
That, so mild his beginnings, he can have no ends.
When he took to the parish, most sad to relate !
Original sin was its terrible state ;
No light in the darkness, no star in the sky,
Of the whole population, not one but must die !
Then—then came the Curate, and surely no change,
Since that first at chaos, so marvellous strange
Has been known or conceived ; in one little week,
No lady need carry a blush on her cheek ;—
The thieves all decamp'd, tongue-tied were the liars,
The sellers, converted, told truth to the buyers ;
The maids grew seraphic, angelic the men,
The old 'roaring lion' durst not from his den ;
Decorum, and piety, order, and peace,
Half ruin'd the lawyers, and spoil'd the police :
Now the godless and graceless flock gladly to church,
Now the sick and bed-ridden are left in the lurch,

Now pew-openers are harass'd, and big beadles strut,
And free seats are *not* free if the church is not shut ;
Now balls are deserted, and plays unremember'd,
And all the May joys prematurely December'd ;
It was said that all those who had fathers before them
Penance did for *their* sins, and but lived to deplore them.
The Curate proved truths with a force mathematic,
He proved without meaning the old word fanatic ;
He proved to his listeners, by counting their heads,
Exactly the number at home in their beds ;
He proved—and fair Truth ne'er seem'd sweeter or
grander—

That man is not rightly a goose, but a gander,
(And that fact, he explain'd, could most clearly be shown
In a very particular friend of his own.)
The Curate did more ;—a blunder irrational
Had mis-named the school of the village the 'National ;'
The boys had their duties ; the principal thing
Was, aloft in the old church to make the walls ring,
And, like cherubs, encourage the people to sing.
Now these cherubs sang badly, all out of tune sadly,
And the Curate at first bore the dissonance madly,
Until he discover'd, and show'd o'er and o'er,
That they couldn't sing worse, if they sang as much more !
It follow'd from this that the people, improved
By the Curate's exertions, felt piously moved
To some cheerful diversion ;—for saints do not thrive
Without something worldly to keep them alive ;—
To give them full justice, it here should be said
That much they consulted, and patiently read,
To find a pursuit which their hearts need not grieve,
Nor even a shade on their spotlessness leave.
They search'd through the Fathers, and little there found,
But just when despair their perplexity crown'd,

St. Thomas Aquinas the friend in need stood,
Pronouncing that music is 'holy and good ;'
They shouted the dictum, they felt quite delighted,
They thought all their labour was doubly requited,
But ah ! one suspicion their joyfulness crost,
If the Curate objected, their pleasure was lost !
The Synod agreed on the Pastor to wait,
And, or banning or blessing, discover their fate ;
The Curate received them with looks calm and gracious,
And mild as his favourite food farinaceous ;
The purpose propounded, the visit explain'd,
They await the decree, with suspense nothing feign'd ;
Alas ! why so dark that erst radiant brow ?
Why quiver those eyelids ? why rises he now ?
He lifted his book, the table he slamm'd,
'Why, gentlemen, surely you would not be damn'd ?'
The worthies first wonder'd, then meekly begun
To mention their reasons ; but ere they had done,
 'Twas lost on the Curate,
 Who still was obdurate,
Till, venting his fury, he splutter'd out, 'Zounds !
When you talk to me this way, my zeal has no bounds,
If your taste were thus heighten'd in every degree,
Who, I ask, will be caring to listen to me ?'



King Sham.

A SKETCH FROM LIFE.

' Il n'y a point de sots si incommodes que ceux qui ont de l'esprit.

—ROCHEFOUCAULD

ONCE on a time there dwelt upon the Earth
One unendow'd by genius or by birth,
With knowledge unencumber'd, as with worth.
He swagger'd forth, and said, 'I'll have my day—
Hey, for King Sham ! let men say what they may.
What others know, can I not that *profess*,
And take the credit for it none the less ?
This I perceive—that diffidence doth lag,
That Talent, toiling, is cut out by Brag ;
And he that claims the merit—takes the swag.
To modest pleadings gates and ears are shut—
The mode potential is to swell and strut.
Let honest zeal, unsordid, sweat the brain ;
For me, prepared to grasp, the fruits remain ;
Of Truth, with Pilate's question I agree—
Truth is a branch of high Philosophy !
Learning and virtue, and all gifts divine,
May work their purpose, so the spoil is mine !
Bethink what game will best your wiles repay,
And then, with tongue in cheek, say—*That's* the way.
A noble project ! Go ahead, my boys !
Who gets the guerdon ? I, who make the noise.

The brainless boobies, aimless, fail to see
That all their striving is, at last, for me.
Wheedle, incite, and, when the battle's won,
Forward I stand, and vaunt what *I* have done ;
Then, with a flourish, sheathe my bloodless sword,
And, in due sequence, seize my just reward.
If other foremost in the fight would be,—
Disgust him—then, he leaves the field to me :
Oppose, denounce, and put him on the shelf—
Next, to the front—and do the thing myself.
Flattery goes far, and homage bringeth grist—
Few men (or women) can that siege resist.
Yet, though your words be soft, and sweet as honey,
They are as empty wind, unback'd by money.
Therefore my cry shall be 'gainst joke or jibe,
(Indifferent for what) subscribe, subscribe !
When, for the race of life, you get astride,
The filly Charity's the one to ride !
What wots the world or if you die or live,
Unless that you have something still to *give* ?
He has the thanks by whom the dole is dealt ;
Enough that leaps the largess from *his* belt.
Cajole, and twit, caress, and promise high ;
If still you *fail*—to give the world the lie,
Suggest a "Testimonial" by and by.
Sign me this paper—testify your debt
To me who never did *your* good forget.
Some scruples ? tush ! a fig for your pretences !
At them at once ! and bring them to their senses.
What ? recreants, cowards, meanlings, to refuse
A fair return to whom you owe your shoes !
Downcast, ashamed, they all before me creep,
And do my bidding like a flock of sheep.

Then they the bantling bring—to me who got it—
And I exclaim—God bless me ! who'd have thought it ?
Ho ! to oppose me who shall be so bold ?
Who can bestow, can he not too withhold ?
Your friends—are those who fawn, or those who sneer ;
For some are held by hope, and some by fear.
If one, distraught, against me dares to preach,
I say he's "personal," and stop his "speech."
Or if sometimes they flat refuse to hear you,
Tell it instead to the Reporters near you ;—
They'll find to their surprise, defeat, and sorrow,
It's in the Papers all the same to-morrow.
This is not all, for living maketh bill ;
For this the best thing is to share a Will :
Fools work, and what they earn must go to some one,
And then, what does it matter to the dumb one ?
A noble maxim—that all men are brothers ;
Nor less a truth, some born to work for others.
Such useful, slavish industry you shirk,
Then manifest the glory of *their* work.
Janty alike, be it to saints or sinners,
Feed them with eleemosynary dinners ;
Some one to couple beg-and-boast presumes—
Don't you look quite as well in *borrow'd* plumes ?
The art of life ! to be *not* what you seem,
Cozen the world by impudence supreme,—
Gross, and yet unsubstantial as a dream !
When the good parasites would bow the knee—
Nay ! it is *you* men honour, honouring *me*.
But if they rashly breathe contempt or blame—
Remember that on *you* descends the shame.
I pray no prophet from the sky be sent
To reckon all the good—I did *prevent* .

Or, of my deeds, interpret to the letter
What, but for me, had certes been much better !

‘ Have you not seen a damsel, fair as day,
Whilst all-deserving, pine herself away ?
Have you not seen a woman bold as brass,
With nought to flatter her—except her glass,—
Proud in success, with her third husband pass ?
So to succeed in honours or in pelf,
Wait not for courting, but “ propose ” *yourself*.’

‘ Though much is gain’d, yet further must be done—
Some for to-day, and more for future, won ;
Forsooth, the future is beyond my ken—
The dreadful difference of now and then !
In this how true—*Bis dat qui citò dat* !—
I know my men too well to count on that !
It’s good to batten on the things that be—
A grander aim—to gull posterity !
Make thine own Statue ! or thy ghost will rue it,
For when thou’rt gone, who will be left to do it ?’



Stylites at Brighton.

AN INSCRIPTION.

1878.

WE saw, when all was over, and too late,
When our magician had succumb'd to fate,
When now no more the sophist tactics charm,—
Specious pretences, or—the 'itching palm,'
When to the stimulant succeeds the qualm,—
Our god of gold was but a thing of clay,—
(Eke with a demon guiding men astray)—
That as a despot King deludes his troops—
Till, at his fall, they know they've been his dupes,—
'Diabolus ! To his Manes let us pray !
Let not the world suspect that *we* were less
Than him who led us,—falsely we confess—
Yet told us so much truth—when he was mellow !
So will we, though we look a little yellow,
An effigy raise of this confounded fellow !
Then shall they think the man who reign'd and ruled
O'er us, hoodwink'd, and every way befool'd—
Deserved of us the homage we have paid him,
Blinded by flattery, (as the purpose sway'd him.)
Besides, alas ! the world knows he has done us,—
Posterity will laugh ! in shrouds to stun us :
So, as revenge, the Devil knows, to sinner,
Is sweeter morsel than of lunch or dinner,

We'll set him up (albeit 'tis unkind)
To expiate humbug "in the parching wind,"
Then as we pass, we'll nod, and grin, and mutter—
Stand there ! thou type of wile, and guile, and "butter ;"
Placed by thy puppets on that gairish spot,
Still to proclaim thou wert what thou wert not !
Doom'd to perpetuate, though tongue be mute,
The *fiction* of thy virtue, and its fruit !'

* * * *Here follow the names of the purblind.*





IN GERMANY.

1844. .



Bastei.

SPOT from primeval chaos unsubdued,
Or, singly, left by the Creative Word
An instance dread of that disorder crude ;
We gaze and tremble ! our calm spirit stirr'd
To deep emotion, by this shapeless herd
Of things material ; and thus do own,—
In all our pride of destiny deferr'd,—
A kindred nature with the senseless stone,
And bow, small block to great, as we to fear are prone



Brandt.

METHINKS, the countless orbs in Space revolving,
At the beginning, were concrete in *One* ;
And *that* great throe, the vast compact dissolving,
Left here enruin'd, when the wrack was done,
A city, which Man's work should equal none.
Bases stupendous, taller than our spires,
Pillars, sky-searching though but yet begun,
Portals, from whose survey man, shrunk, retires ;
Grandeur beyond our means, yet less than our desires.



The Dresden Gallery.

TREASURE of atoms of great souls translated,—
Sparks of the inextinguishable fire
Erst, in the upward struggle, scintillated ;
Relics, bequeath'd to comfort and inspire
The future earth-worm destined to be higher ;
Beautiful sublimations of high thought,
Prison'd for centuries in dense attire ;
Glimpses, in heavenward flight, by Genius caught,
To thousands aye unknown if not to vision brought.



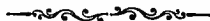
Cologne Cathedral seen from the Rhine.

· LIKE a dismember'd stone-god thou appearest !
Knowing the course of ages will restore,
Thy giant limb, and front sublime thou rearest,
As he, bold Titan, proudly did of yore ;
And, even now, is thy abasement o'er,
For man admits thy long neglected right,
Resolving to endure thy shame no more ;
Lo ! where the weed had growth, the owl delight,
Again the chisel clinks with hundred-handed might.



A Full Moon at Ehrenbreitstein.

I SAW at Ehrenbreitstein the still Queen,
Crowning, refulgent, the embattled height,
On all things smiling with as pure a sheen
As forth she shed, her first created night ;
Such sweet communion held she by her light,
That some lone mortal, gazing from afar,
Forgot his earth-born nature, and, despite
Whate'er of ills his aspirations mar,
Became, for little while, as her attendant star.



The Ariadne.

'Tis a great deed, Dannécker, thus to earn
A perpetuity objective, so
That, if the unending lot whereto we yearn
Not unto us were granted, thou wouldst know
Prolong'd existence, whilst men come and go,
Thy soul in stone,—a name for ever new.
Nor would man's Maker thus on man bestow
The skill creative, and, unpleasèd, view,
Of our decaying form, such lasting image true.



The Ariadne.

It's very well ;—that arm reposeth sweetly,
Wholly uncared for by the eager mind ;
And her fair form is fashion'd so completely,
It is too difficult a fault to find ;
If to profess a choice I were inclined,
First would I praise the limb depending low,
As proof of art in nature, most refined :
Persuade me it is nerveless, ere I go !
Or, if she liveth not, what *will* supports it so ?



The Novice.

WITHIN that antique Convent thou art hidden,—
A jewel in a casket, yet mine eye,
Searching, lacks not her image ; spirit-bidden,
The loved form, like an angel, standeth by.
Ah, if indeed unwilling, would she hie
Unto the mountain-top, with features mild,
And, with a mocking presence, hear me sigh ?
This were to prove true love but Fancy's child,
And sympathy, alas ! no more than notion wild.





A CHASE OF ECHO.



A Chase of Echo.

AN IDYL.

[The legend of Ovid reversed—Echo pursued, instead of pursuing. Echo still lives—as a Voice : she is the object of love—love, as an abstraction,—real only whilst unreal—lost when found. Laon is the love that dies at the moment of disenchantment.]

LAON.

VISION of sleep,—and Dream of waking hours !
Why is it, Echo, that I find thee not ?
Thou livest, doubtless, for the heart is true,
And in my heart thou livest :

Echo dear !

Soon shall I find thee,—for I think, nay, know
That thou art near me,—answer to my call !
Be Nature blessèd for these yearnings sure,
Be Nature blessèd for unfailing hope.

* * * * *

Where from me hidest thou ?—where art thou, Echo ?
Thou knowest I have sought thee o'er the plain,—
In meads and groves, and in the haunts of men :
Sweet, answer me ! that I may be where *thou* art ;
Echo !—not here :

Echo !—alas, not here :

* * * * *

On, on I wander, wander, wander on,—
Aweary wandering, alone, alone !

Ah! *with* thee, I would tread the Earth like air,
 Thy presence giving each a two-fold life,
 Thy soul with mine us winging o'er the hills!

* * * * *

Here, by this lucent lake's smooth, smiling face,
 The woods and rocks around in holy stillness,
 Here thou awaitest me : I'll find thee here.

Echo !

Echo.

She is here !

Come to me !

Come to me.

There,—there ! 'tis sure,—across the lake I'll swim ;

Dearest, I come !

Dearest, I come.

* * * * *

Alas ! not found—again—again not found.
 Come to me, Echo ! that together we
 May see, and hear, live but the self-same life :
 Come to me, sweetheart ! to my longing come !
 No joy without thee can be quite a joy,
 What *thine* eyes see not, brings no joy to mine—
 To look on cheerless, what *thou* seest not.
 That thus thou shouldst be near me,—it is pain ;—
 Pain to be near, nor see thee, nor embrace.
 List Echo ! hear me !

Pitiless ! she is gone

As I approach and think to clasp, she flies ;

Oh, I am breathless, and must faint, or sleep. (*Sleeps.*)

(*Murmurs in sleep.*)

Dear love, but this is well : come—come to me !

Now, now I see thee, now I hold thee near ;

We shall not separate—shall never cease !
Such love for ever lives :

(*Wakes.*)

No more ! no more :
Yet shall I chase her, if she will not stay,
Where she hath cheated me :—away, away !

* * * * *
Out of the maze at last ! I pant with speed ;
But where—where is my Echo ? Echo, hear !
How on these spreading down-lands so evanish ?
The velvet sward, too soft for resonance,
Too smooth the print to take of her light feet,—
How shall I guide me ?

Swelling on and on,
The earth is undulate like waving waters,
Now high, now low—an ocean, though of land :
Yet, in that trough adown she may be found,—
There could she gain some harbour ; I'll descend ;
The place is silent ;—now, if she but speak,
Though lightly, I'll pursue her o'er the wold.

Echo !

Echo.

Whence was the voice ? I heard it very clear.

Echo !

Echo.

Lo, she hath flitted ; but I'll call again.

Echo, where art thou ?

Where art thou ?

Echo !

Echo.

Hearest thou me ?

Hearest thou me ?

Yea, love, I heard thee ! and do straight come near

The spot wherefrom thou speakest ; I am here.

Echo, my Echo ! do but speak again ;

Oh, flee not from me,—flee not from me, love !

Echo !

She waits not, cruel ! I must follow her !

I faint—I faint ! once more,—once more will call :

Echo !

Echo.

Answer me !

Answer me.

Thou lovest me ?

Thou lovest me ?

Thou knowest that I love thee, Echo sweet !

Forsake me not ! for I am broken-hearted :—

My strength declineth as the day doth wane ;

I sleep, or die :

Be with me, Echo, now ! (*Sleeps.*)

ECHO *speaks.*

Yea, I'll be with thee, Laon,—in thy sleep—

Fain would I pity thee—fain prove to be

The love thou seekest—and so lose delight ;—

Thy pain, my bliss,—the bliss to be besought !

For aye evading, and for ever loved !

So *shalt* thou see me,—for that sight is life,

Fire to thy heart, and frenzy to thy soul.

LAON (*in sleep*).

Echo, loved Echo, now I see thy face,

Yea, hear thee breathe, yea, know that thou art mine :

Thou'lt never leave me ! fly from me no more.

ECHO *speaks.*

Fond, foolish boy, then were thy chase at end !

I must away, lest thou thy pastime lose !

LAON (*waking*).

Oh, horror ! sleeping live, and waking die !
Echo, dear Echo !

She hath fled me, fled !
Must I then sleep to make her live to me ?

* * * * *

The dells are ended ; on this arid plain
The merest sprite can hide not ; let me rest ;
Oh, void in heart ! oh, heart an aching void !
Oh, languid limbs, sustaining heavy heart !
This mossy bank—how soft ! (*Reclines.*)

*Fairest, why fadest thou always away from me,
Here and there answering, never appearing,
Somewhiles approaching, or whispering low to me,
What shall I think, is it loving or fearing?*

*Is it of will, or of fate thou art lost to me,
Near me to hear me wherever I'm straying?
Is it in gladness or grief thou escapest me,
Mocking my call, and thy presence betraying?*

*Yet, whilst thou answerest, dear one, I'll follow thee,
Wooing the voice, and its origin blessing,
Lovingly hearing, and calling unceasingly,
Till eyes shall behold, and arms shall be pressing.*

* * * * *

And next, oh whither, whither do I wend—
Abroad this dreary field, withouten bound?
That dim horizon is, I think, the Sea;
That mark I'll reach, and then no farther go.

* * * * *

It is the Sea,—and by its shore are crags :
There doth my Echo hide :

I come, sweet Echo.

* * * * *

Here, in this sea-cave, will my phantom be !
'Tis deep and wide ; the voice of Ocean list !
If she be here, I'll win her,—winning, hold.

Echo !

Echo.

I follow !

Follow.

O happy me ! I'll enter ;

Echo, love !

Echo, kind Echo ! kill me not with scorn !
Echo, kind Echo ! kill me not with woe !—
Sure then she spake, but then again is dumb.
Why in these dark recesses should I bide ?
Here, from the beach, I'll call her, o'er the Sea.

Echo ! hark—Echo ! list—my Echo ! list :
Nought but mine own voice moaning o'er the main :
What worth to me is life, when hope is dead ?
My heart is failing fast, mine eyelids droop ;
Come—come, blest sleep ; my feet approach the flood :
The waves will mount—upon them I shall float
Another world unto,—and to my Echo. (*Sleeps.*)

ECHO speaks.

Doom'd Laon, thou wilt die : nathless I love thee !
So will they hear me ! and indulge in vain,
A love that doth not to their world pertain.
See me once more, dear Laon ! dost thou not ?

LAON (*in sleep*).

Echo, I see thee, and methinks thy beauty
Sublimeth more and more ; turn not away
Those dove-like, dreamy eyes : look on me yet,—
That I the trance of thy seraphic traits
May have with me in mine eternal rest :—
Now I regard thee—never to forget !

(*Wakes.*)

Despair !—despair !

I think the world is false,
My Love a Voice—mine idol but a Shade.
All hope is dead ;—is higher life a dream ?
The life of dreams is love and joy to me :
My heart is void, and life is nothingness.
Then rather let me sleep that long, long sleep,
Where vain hope is not, or where love abides—
Where, dreaming only, I my Echo see.

The heaving billows lift me from the Earth ;—
Echo, lost Echo ! Daughter of the Air,
Adieu ! adieu !



L'Envoi.

*Go, go, my book, go, tuning tell
Conceits that haply me befell,
Or in my youth, or later age,
And set my soul a-singing ;
From me, to bear upon the page,
Some traces of my pilgrimage
To them whose life is springing.*

*Wend well, my book, wend wide, and find
The true-born brotherhood of mind,
Con-natural souls who me not know,
Albeit they have been yearning ;
Their kindled love may serve to show
The boons we but on self bestow
Are little worth the earning.*

*So speed, my book, so gainful speed,
As that, in coming men, to breed
New motions of the heart and brain,
To send their wits a-flying ;
Then shall I not have writ in vain,
But charmedly live on again,
And never quite be dying.*



Appendix.

THE following complimentary Sonnets, etc., are added, in hope that the indulgent reader will forgive any seeming vanity, on consideration that the recipient could not otherwise embalm these valued Reminiscences of Friendship—now for the first time published.

The Friend of Friends.¹

INSCRIBED TO JOSEPH ELLIS, AUTHOR OF 'CAESAR IN EGYPT.'

Who is the Friend-of-Friends?—not one who smiles
While you are prosperous,—purse full, in fair fame;
Flattering, 'Come, be my household's altar-flame,'
When knowing you can bask on sunny isles:
Not one who saith, 'That brain's a mighty mould,'
With base-coin'd hints about alloys in gold:
Not he who frankly tells you all your faults,
But drops all merit into vampire-vaults:—
No; the true friend stands close 'midst circling storms,
When you are poor,—lost,—wrestling thro' a cloud;
With whom your ship rides high in friezing calms,
Its banner, ghostly pale, to him still proud;
Whose heart's Blest-Arab-spice dead hope embalms,
The same, tho' you sate throned,—or waiting for your
shroud.

December 26, 1879.

¹ By R. H. Horne, author of *Orion*, *Cosmo de Medici*, etc. etc.
See p. 149.

To Joseph Ellis.¹

FRIENDS meet in paths unsought ; and when dire Care,
With pitiless gripe, hath fixed its gnawing tooth
Among our heart-strings, and, for love in sooth,
And those bright visions of diaphanous air,
Quick Fancy's brood, of all that's pure and fair ;—
Instead of home-lit Peace, the dream of youth,
Linked with some Help-mate who, or pain or ruth,
Occasion claiming, smiles nor tears would spare,—
We prove, alas ! how one of womankind
But gained a trust implicit—to betray ;
Then twice-told welcome is the hap to find
A kindred being on Life's darkling way,
Whose deeds and converse, rich in heart and mind,
Shed thro' the gloom, like Thine, a sunny ray !

T. J. J.

¹ By the Rev. T. J. Judkin, M.A., Caius Coll. Cam., author of *By-gone Moods* ; *The Spirit of the Psalter* ; *Original Hymns*, etc. etc. See p. 170.

To the Author of 'Caesar in Egypt.'¹

ELLIS! no slipshod muse is thine : robust,
Incisive, musical, thy lines beguile
The hours away, and yet inform the while.
The mighty ones of ancient days thou dost
Recall. Great Caesar, shrewd, urbane, august,
Lives on thy page anew ; and her whose smile
Made him her thrall, the 'Serpent of old Nile,'
Thou limnest in true tints, proportions just !
Next, o'er Costanza's heart-enchaining tale
I weep, rejoice. Anon, upon mine ear—
Solemn and sad as sound of funeral bell—
Vibrates the sore-tried world discoverer's wail.—
Sing on, dear Bard ! 'tis thine to wake the tear,
Or tune to mirth the Minstrel's magic spell !
H. C.

April 5, 1877.

¹ By Henry Campkin, Esq., F.S.A.

Thrace, Odes I., IX.¹

WHITE with deep snow, behold, Soracte soars,
And scarce the struggling forests bear the load,
 And bound by winter's frost
 The rivers stay their course.
Dissolve the cold : pile on the hearth the logs ;
Bring without stint the wine of four years' growth,
 Bring down in Sabine jar
 O Thaliarchus dear.
Trust to the gods the rest : when they have laid
The winds contending on the yeasty deep,
 No more the cypress waves,
 Nor antient ash is shaken.
Seek not to know what lot the morrow brings,
And count as gain each day that chance shall give,
 Nor thou my boy despise,
 Sweet love or joyful dance.
While youth is green, and peevish, gray-hair'd eld
Is not yet come, at nightfall's trysting hour
 In field and open place
 Let gentle whispers breathe :
Now let the pleasant laugh from inmost nook
Betray the lurking girl : seize then the pledge
 Snatched from the maiden's arm
 Or finger unresisting.

April 7, 1868.

¹ Rendered by George Long, M.A., Trin. Coll. Cam., author of *The Decline of the Roman Republic: Translations of the Thoughts of the Emperor M. Aurelius, The Discourses of Epictetus. An Old Man's Thoughts*, etc. etc. See p. 174.

Soda.¹

‘Fies nobilium Tu quoque fontium.’—*Horat.* Od. xiii. l. 3.

‘Fontium Qui celat origines.’—*Horat.* Od. xiv. l. 4.

O FONS Salutis! Vita! Fides mea!
Tumultuosi qui mala pectoris
Compescis, et morbi furores
Attenuas, saliente lymphâ;

Musis sodali sub Camerario²
Præstes novellam Castaliam mihi;
Salvumque dilectis amicis
Restitues, animosque reddes:

Sparsim remotas condis origines
Arcana rerum subter, et abditus
Nascentis ad terræ recessus,
Primigenique elementa mundi:

Unde ausa in auras Te trahere, et leves
Miscere doctâ particulas manu
Cohors Medentûm, ut rivus orbi
Mirifica fluat auctus arte.

Agnosce Patris munera! Quem Deum
Agnoscit, omni parte operis Sui,
Ad Solis occasus et ortus,
Terra, Mare, æthereumque Cælum.

August 22, 1842.

¹ Written by the Marquess Wellesley, when at the age of eighty; as also the following Translation. Not included in his *Primitiæ et Reliquiæ*. See p. 165.

² His physician was Dr. Chambers.

Translation.

FOUNTAIN of health ! and hope ! and faith ! and life !
That quell'st my tortured bosom's restless strife ;
And, to relieve my agonizing dreams,
Pour'st forth thy crystal, cool, bright, salient streams.
Under the hand of classic Chambers placed,
A new Castalia freshens to my taste :
Inspires new life, and spirit, and again,
Leads me revived to the gay haunts of men.
In nature's secrets hid, thy birth-place lies,
Far scattered, deep, remote from human eyes,
Amid the germs that first gave nature birth,
And the primæval elements of earth ;
Whence dared to draw Thee to earth's airs, and blend
Thy lightsome texture in one glorious end
Machaon's Race ; and spread thy wholesome streams
Where'er the Sun extends his living beams.
Acknowledge God's good gifts ; whose bounteous hand
His works acknowledge all through main and land,
Where'er the sun sinks low, or rises high,
The Earth, the Sea, and the æthereal sky.

*Another Translation of the Ode, made at same Period,
by Joseph Ellis.*

O SALUTARY fountain ! Life ! my confidence,
Thou allayest the disorders of my troubled breast,
Attenuating the ragings of disease
By thy sparkling water ;

Handmaid of the Muses, gladdening my chamber,
Thou affordest to me a new Castalian spring,
Re-invigorating my spirits, and restoring me, healed,
To my dear, chosen friends.

Scattered remote within the secret places of the Earth,
And hid in the recesses of first-formed matter,
Amidst the elements of the embryonic world,
Thou didst conceal thy origin ;

From whence the band of healing men have boldly brought
thee forth,
Mingling with discriminate hand thy aeriform particles,
And causing thee to flow with admirable influence,
A miraculous stream !

Confess the gifts of our beneficent Father !
Whom the Earth, the Sea, and Heaven above, acknowledge,
In every part of His work, from the rising to the setting
of the Sun,
As God supreme.



Charles Hatchett, Joseph Jekyll, and James Smith.¹

ON the 29th of January 1836, Mr. Hatchett of Belle Vue House, Chelsea, sent an Engraved Head of himself to his old friend Mr. Jekyll, and on the next day, the 30th of January, Mr. Jekyll returned the following Note :—

‘30th January 1836.

‘Thanks for a kind memorial of our long friendship, though it looks somewhat radical, on the 30th of January, to thank the Hatchett for the Head of Charles.

‘JOSEPH JEKYLL.’

Some days after this, Mr. Jekyll again wrote to Mr. Hatchett,—‘I told my merry friend James Smith (the celebrated Author of the ‘Rejected Addresses’), how I had thanked you for the Engraving. He sate down directly, and versified it.

‘AN Answer, Charles Hatchett, thou claimest,
So take it both pithy and short,
For surely, so able a Chemist,
Can never reject a Retort.
Your Portrait, no Painter can match it,
So I scorn all their envy or snarls,
And, like Cromwell, I owe to a Hatchett,
What I gain by the Head of a Charles.

JOSEPH JEKYLL.’

‘NEW STREET, SPRING GARDENS,
February 13, 1836.’

¹ This anecdote was written by Charles Hatchett, Esq., F.R.S., for, and given to, J. E., 8th October 1836.

LAST ¹ time I wrote to you in rhyme,
My lowly muse you charged with crime.
For Cant, I will say nought about it,
My conscience tells me I'm without it :
And want of sense is quite in season,
For who expects both rhyme and reason ?
But I will take another Theme,
Which less absurd I hope you'll deem ;
I'll strut in Epicurus' gown,
And praise the pastimes of the Town.
For Joy alone we live, my Friend,
Be that, of life, the aim and end.
Why pass our time in strife and care,
In melancholy and despair ?
Our days are but a little span,
We must enjoy them when we can ;
While fortune, youth, and fate allow,
Ere to fell Death we're forced to bow.
 Let's leave Ambition to the Great,
 With all the cares which on it wait,
 In governing this stormy State,—
An Island torn by tempests more
Than restless waves which round it roar :
 In Eastern pomp we'll sit elate ;
Bring us then perfumes, flow'rs, and wine,
The Lily with the Rose entwine ;
Whilst black-ey'd Girls, with chaplets crown'd,
In mazy circles, beat the ground ;

¹ This Horatian Epistle was addressed to J. E. by his schoolfellow-friend, George Houldsworth Theakston.

Our Company must be but small
And Men of polished manners all ;
Gay, yet endowed with cultured mind,—
By arts and poetry refined.
Let Authors preach,—poor starving wights,—
Of Intellectual Delights ;
Both mental, and corporeal sense
To gratify, is no offence.
Either of these if you despise,
You know not in what lux'ry lies ;
And, of true Epicures the laugh,—
Of all your wealth you use but half !

But when of wit and wine quite full,
Our friends begin to be but dull,—
Some hours before the break of day,—
Quietly I should steal away,
Unto the bower, or snug boudoir,
Where new delights remain in store :
There the bliss of Love I'll prove,—
Less half the joy not crown'd with love !

Let me describe this charming place,
The fane of Beauty and of Grace ;
The room to which I would repair,
 Unlike the one which now we quit,
Is free from noise, or pomp, or glare,—
 Things that for love are most unfit :
The ceiling's arch'd and painted blue,
 To imitate Italia's sky,
Such as in Summer's eve we view,
 When not a cloud doth meet the eye ;
Around it naked Cupids play,
And modest nymphs, and Graces gay ;

The Wainscot is with tap'stry hung,
Showing whate'er, in colours bright and strong,
Of Love, or Arms, the bards have sung,
Whether in antient or in modern song ;
The colour'd lamps reflect a mellow'd light,
Made to relieve, but not to dim the sight,
And so designed as shall inspire
Soft thoughts of amorous desire ;
And silence, of true love the sign,—
Which loquacity most hates,
Though solitary, seems to pine ;—
And ever, with ground-seeking eye,
And unpresumptuous modesty,
Its mistress's decrees awaits,
Yet dares not even make reply.
This Temple's Deity is fair,
As famed Circassia's beauties are ;—
See, in her cheeks the young blood glows !
The pouting lips, the well-formed nose,
Are so described by every bard
That to be new is somewhat hard ;
Her eyes are of that varying hue
Which seems to change at ev'ry view,
Now, they in liquid softness swim,
And now, they seem with lightning fired,
Just as may suit the moment's whim,
Or by the passing thought inspired.
And, on her neck and soft white breast,
The fair-hair'd curls, in clusters, rest ;
She, on a couch of roseate tint reclines,
Fixing her anxious eye on the arch above,
Her slender fingers in her locks entwines,
While, with impatience, she expects her love.

Thus the fair Goddess sits on high,
Not to be viewed by vulgar eye,
Thus Love's alluring altar stands,
Not to be touched by impious hands,
And there she graciously invites
Her favour'd swain to share her rites.
To all my house, my friends are free,
This is alone for her and me.
Brief time in sluggard sleep we'll waste,
The vital hours run quickly on,
Each to our journey's end we haste,
The winged moments fly with speed,
And endless dark and night succeed,
We shall have time to sleep anon !

Carissime,

Vale !

G. H. T.

August 26, 1833.



Richmond Hill.¹

THE treatment of the subject in this Sonnet was suggested by an anecdote of Vancouver, who, returned from his last voyage, posted immediately, at nightfall, to Richmond Hill. The season was summer. Rising early, and drawing aside the curtain from his window, he saw, for the first time, the beautiful valley of the Thames, and, enchanted by the scene, exclaimed, ‘Here will I live, here will I die!’ He lies buried near, in the Church of Petersham.

¹ See p. 162.



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